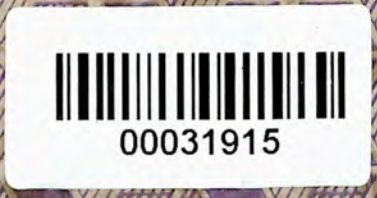
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SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,
Earl of Orford.

From an Original Painting in Enamel by Zinck
In the Possession of the Hon.ble Mrs Walpole.

London, Published by Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, 1806.

MEMOIRS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

EARL OF ORFORD.

BY

WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.A.S.

ARCHDEACON OF WILTS.

A NEW EDITION:

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

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1816.

" Omnia prius experiri verbis quam armis sapientem decet."
Terence.

" The blood of man should never be shed but to redeem the
" blood of man. It is well shed for our Family, for our Friends,
" for our God, for our Country, for our Kind. The rest is vanity,
" the rest is crime." *Burke.*

T. C. Hansard, Printer,
Peterborough-court, Fleet-street,
London.

TO THE

Rev. HUMPHREY SUMNER, D.D.

PROVOST,

AND TO THE

FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS

OF

KING'S COLLEGE

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

THESE

MEMOIRS OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

(ONCE A SCHOLAR OF THEIR SOCIETY)

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR,

WHO IS INDEBTED FOR HIS EDUCATION

TO THE

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

THIRD EDITION.

Both the former impressions of this Work being now out of print, the Author feels great satisfaction in presenting the present Edition to the Public. It is augmented with a few additional Letters; and a selection of the most interesting parts of the Correspondence and Documents annexed to the quarto Edition.

In other respects the references to the Collection of Papers are retained in this impression, because the authenticity of the Work depends principally on their authority.

PREFACE

TO THE QUARTO EDITION.

IT is unnecessary to offer an apology for submitting to the Public, Memoirs of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, which embrace a period so important in the annals of this country. It will be sufficient to explain the motives which induced me to undertake this Work; to announce the plan; to state the authorities from which the materials are derived; and to acknowledge obligations.

Nine years have elapsed since I undertook to write *The Historical and Political State of Europe;* the plan of which was printed, and submitted to the public. In the prosecution of that work I obtained access to various collections of original papers, particularly those of the earls of *Hardwicke, Harrington,* and *Peterborough,* and of Sir *Benjamin Keene.* It was in such forwardness, that the histories of Spain, Portugal, Austria, the German constitution, Russia, and part of Prussia and Sweden, were already prepared for the press; I had also

sketched the histories of the Italian States, Holland, and France, and several maps were finished. Finding it impossible to obtain in England sufficient information respecting foreign countries, I visited Germany in 1794, with a view to obtain an accurate knowledge of recent events.

On my return, I went to Wolterton, for the purpose of inspecting the papers of Horatio lord Walpole, father of the present lord Walpole, whose interesting correspondence during his embassies in France and Holland, were of the utmost importance to my undertaking. I employed several months in perusing and arranging these papers. In the course of this occupation, I traced motives of action unknown to historians, which placed in a new light the foreign and domestic transactions of the cabinet. I also derived, from the conversation of lord and lady Walpole, many facts and anecdotes which elucidated the events adverted to in the papers.

The progress of the French revolution, and the uncertain position of Europe compelled me, notwithstanding the expense and loss of time and labour, to suspend my original design, and to defer the completion of *The historical and political State*, till the return of more quiet and favourable times.

With the sanction of lord Walpole, I proposed, therefore, to give to the public a selection of his father's papers. In the course of this undertaking, I met with several letters and papers of Sir Robert Walpole, which made me soli-

citous to obtain farther information concerning his character and administration.

On my arrival in London, I had frequent conversations with the late earl of Orford, who related many anecdotes of his father, which led to further inquiries. It now insensibly became a part of my plan, to blend in the narrative as many particulars relating to Sir Robert Walpole as could be authenticated, and to insert, in the correspondence, as many of his letters as I could obtain.

This design was promoted by the kindness of lord Orford, who imparted to me all his father's papers which remained in his possession, and permitted me to use them at my discretion, without the smallest control.

The connection and friendship which for a long period had subsisted between Sir Robert Walpole and his brother-in-law Charles viscount Townshend, naturally suggested that the Townshend papers must afford considerable information.

The acquisition of these important documents led to the discovery and communication of others, particularly in the *Hardwicke*, *Grantham*, *Waldegrave*, and *Poyntz* collections.

With these sources of information the work gradually expanded, and Sir Robert Walpole from being a secondary, became the principal object. I therefore interrupted the impression of lord Walpole's correspondence, and postponed that publication. I determined to give to the world—The MEMOIRS of the LIFE and

ADMINISTRATION of SIR ROBERT WALPOLE, drawn from these copious and original sources; and to illustrate, by interesting and authentic documents, the transactions of the busy and eventful period, in which that minister acted so conspicuous a part.

In the execution of this extensive plan, I found myself under the necessity of discussing the interests of Great Britain and of Europe, of developing the intricacies of cabinets, of tracing motives of action, of delineating characters, and discriminating the views of discordant politics.

Anxious to avoid an error, too common with biographers, of considering only one side of the question, I was no less solicitous to procure the papers of those who opposed, than of those who supported the measures of Sir Robert Walpole. With this view I obtained communications of the *Stanhope*, *Middleton*, *Melcombe* and *Egremont* Papers. These I have printed without interpolation and without disguise, not omitting a single invective, but leaving the reader to judge between the partial eulogiums of Hervey, and the acrimonious reproaches of Bolingbroke.

The Plan of this work is, to give an uninterrupted narrative of the life and administration of Sir Robert Walpole, illustrated by original correspondence and authentic papers.

The Memoirs, which are contained in the first volume, are divided into eight periods,

comprehending a term of sixty-nine years, from his birth in 1676, to his death in 1745.

The correspondence, which occupies the second and third volumes, is, for facility of reference, also divided into eight periods, applying to the subjects of the corresponding periods in the narrative.

The Authorities from which the materials are derived, may be divided into PRINTED, ORAL, and MANUSCRIPT information.

PRINTED INFORMATION.

Though this source of intelligence is open to every writer, and an omission to consult and compare the advocates on both sides of the question, indicates either negligence or want of candour, yet *Smollett* and *Belsham*, in their accounts of the times, have betrayed these faults in the highest degree. Dazzled by the eloquence of Pulteney, seduced by the sophistry of Bolingbroke, or deluded by the speciousness of Chesterfield, they appear to have formed their opinions without comparison, to have stigmatized the whole administration of Sir Robert Walpole, as an uniform mass of corruption and depravity, as a gloomy period, during which not a single ray of light gleams through the impenetrable darkness. Though I have occasionally noticed the misrepresentations of these writers, yet, as Smollett quotes no authorities,

and appears *never* to have consulted the Journals, and either partially or superficially to have perused the parliamentary debates; and as Belsham is, in general, a mere copyist of Smollett as to facts, though he differs from him in speculations; I have not relied on either as an authority.

The history of England which I have principally consulted is, the continuation of Rapin, published under the name of Tindal, but principally written by Dr. Birch. His papers in the Museum, and in the Hardwicke Collection, which I have examined with scrupulous attention, and various other documents submitted to his inspection, to which I have had access, prove great accuracy of research, judgment in selection, and fidelity in narration. He derived considerable assistance from persons of political eminence, particularly the late lord Walpole, the late earl of Hardwicke, and the honourable Charles Yorke.* Birch was a staunch Whig, but his political opinions have never led him to forget his duty as an historian. He has not garbled or falsified debates, or misstated facts, he has not wantonly traduced characters, or acrimoniously reviled individuals, because they espoused the cause which he disapproved; but in his whole work, whether he praises or blames, there is a

* The account of the partition treaty was written by the late earl of Hardwicke. The account of lord Somers's argument in the Banker's case, was written by his great nephew, the late Mr. C. Yorke. I can also trace numerous communications by Horace Walpole, though they cannot be so easily specified.

manly integrity and candid temperance, which must recommend him to the discerning reader.

It naturally became a part of my task to consult all works which treat of the life and administration of Sir Robert Walpole; and it is remarkable, that except political pamphlets, which were confined to temporary and specific objects, my utmost research could only discover two publications.

The first is, "A critical History of the Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, now Earl of Orford, collected chiefly from the Debates in Parliament, and the political Writings on both Sides, 1743." This anonymous work is contemptible both in matter and style. It is, with few exceptions, a mere compilation from the most virulent opposition pamphlets, but is useful as an index of the points which, at the time, drew most attention, and as containing an account of the most remarkable publications of parties on both sides.

The second is, "Histoire du Ministère du Chevalier *Walpool* devenu Ministre d'Angleterre, et Comte *d'Oxford*, Amsterdam, 1764, in three volumes." This work is principally compiled from the preceding publication, although the author affects greater impartiality, and frequently turns the most virulent censures into the most fulsome panegyric. The writer is so ignorant as to call him earl of *Oxford*, and so deficient in point of information, that the whole period from the declaration of war against Spain in 1739, to the resignation of the minister

in 1742, is contained in fourteen lines. From sources so partial and deficient, little information could be derived.

I have carefully consulted the political writings of the times, on both sides of the question. I have perused with some attention the most violent invectives, and party statements against the minister, as well as those that were written in his favour, and from a scrupulous comparison of both have endeavoured to extract the truth.

These works are too numerous to recapitulate. To the political writings of Bolingbroke, Pulteney, and Chesterfield, I have paid peculiar attention, and scrutinized them with a close, and, I trust, an impartial inspection.

The "Craftsman," which commenced in 1727, was the great vehicle of opposition essays. This paper, as it always contained the strength of the arguments urged against the measures of government, detailed with great eloquence and wit, has been assiduously examined. The Political State of Great Britain, the Historical Register, and Annals of Europe (ample and not incorrect periodical publications), have contributed information with respect to domestic events, points of chronology, and debates in parliament.

I have derived collateral assistance from the Gentleman's and London Magazines, which were ably conducted.

I have occasionally collected the substance of debates from *Chandler*'s Parliamentary Proceedings, to the general accuracy of which, though

recently called in question, several reasons have induced me to give credit.

1. They are taken from the contemporary papers, such as the Historical Register, and the Political State of Great Britain; the authors of which were frequently supplied with notes and memorandums by members of parliament. From the year 1735, when the debates were no longer published in the Political State, the speeches were given in the Gentleman's Magazine by Guthrie, and in the London Magazine by Gordon, both of whom constantly attended in the gallery of the house, and received information from members of parliament.

2. There are among the Walpole and Orford papers minutes of Sir Robert Walpole's speeches, and occasional notes, taken by him in the house of commons, of those of other members. In comparing these minutes and notes with the speeches in Chandler, I generally find the leading expressions preserved in the debates; which proves the authenticity of those particular speeches, and furnishes a strong presumption in favour of the rest.

3. Several letters, which I have published in the Correspondence, contain brief accounts of the parliamentary proceedings, and in most instances accord with the printed debates.

4. Sir Robert Walpole told his son, the late earl of Orford, that his speeches were in general faithfully represented in the public prints.

5. Lord Bath assured the present bishop of Salisbury, Dr. Douglas, that most of his speeches

were correctly given, yet better than he had delivered them.

From the 19th of November, 1740, many of the debates were *written* by Dr. Johnson, and published in the Gentleman's Magazine. Doubts have arisen concerning their authenticity. Some of Johnson's biographers have declared that they were partly composed by himself; another, Sir John Hawkins, that they were wholly fictitious; and Johnson himself is said to have confessed, that they were not authentic, and excepting their general import, were the work of his own imagination.

This account, however, is not perfectly consonant to fact. Either Johnson deceived himself into an exaggeration of his own powers, or his biographers mistook his assertion. The real truth is, that Johnson constantly received notes and heads of the speeches from persons employed by Cave, and particularly from Guthrie. The bishop of Salisbury recollects to have seen several of these notes, which Guthrie communicated to him on the very day on which he obtained them, which were regularly transmitted to Johnson, and formed the basis of his orations.

Oral and Manuscript Information.

Walpole Papers.—My first and warmest acknowledgments are due to lord Walpole, for the papers of his father Horatio, the first lord Walpole of Wolterton, brother of Sir Robert

Walpole, and embassador in France and Holland. This collection has afforded the most ample materials: It contains his original correspondence, both public and private, as well abroad as in England; many confidential letters which passed between him, the queen, and Sir Robert Walpole; various documents, memorials, and political dissertations, which afford the clearest insight into foreign affairs, and prove his active and indefatigable exertions.

A specific detail of this collection, which occupies no less than one hundred and forty folio volumes, must be referred to a future publication, in which I purpose to give a selection of the most interesting letters not inserted in this work.

I am also indebted to lord Walpole for many interesting anecdotes and explanations, which he had from his father.

Orford Papers.—The late earl of ORFORD, third son of Sir Robert Walpole, favoured me with access to all the papers of his father remaining in his possession.

Had this collection been preserved entire, it would have been invaluable and unparalleled, both for extent and importance, but some have been destroyed, others dispersed, and many lost. When he retired from office, the minister destroyed a large quantity. Not long before his death he said to his son, "Horace, when I am gone, you will find many curious papers in the drawer of this table," and mentioned, among

others, the memorial which had been drawn up by Bolingbroke, and presented by the duchess of Kendal to the king. When his son, some time after his death, inspected the drawer, the papers were lost, and were never afterwards recovered. In relating this anecdote, the late earl of Orford declared his opinion that the papers had been either inadvertently destroyed by his elder brother, or stolen by a steward. Several letters belonging to this collection were given to the late lord Walpole, and are preserved at Wolterton. Notwithstanding these defalcations, the collection still contains many documents of high importance, of which I have availed myself.

To lord Orford I am highly indebted for numerous facts and anecdotes relating to Sir Robert Walpole, which nobody but himself could have authenticated. In gratefully acknowledging these favours, I feel it my duty to pay a just tribute to his candour. He repeatedly said, "You will remember that I am the son of Sir Robert Walpole, and therefore must be prejudiced in his favour. Facts I will not misrepresent or disguise, but my opinions and reflections on those facts you will receive with caution, and adopt or reject at your discretion." Although he testified a natural solicitude to see the memoirs of his father, yet he not unfrequently expressed his wishes that the work might not appear while he was alive, lest it might be thought that from motives of delicacy, I had not delivered my sentiments with freedom.

Townshend Papers.—I am obliged to the marquis TOWNSHEND for access to the papers of his grandfather Charles, the second viscount Townshend, who was plenipotentiary at Gertruydenburg and at the Hague, and principal secretary of state. Lord Townshend's masterly letters to George the First; the notes between George the Second and him; the confidential intercourse which he regularly maintained with his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Walpole, while he was at Hanover; have materially contributed to illustrate those transactions in which the brother ministers had a principal share.

Hardwicke Papers.—To my noble friend the earl of HARDWICKE, I gratefully acknowledge my obligations for the use of his collection. From it I have been supplied with various papers, memorandums, and narratives of his grandfather, the lord chancellor, and of the late earl of Hardwicke; letters from the duke of Newcastle; the confidential correspondence between Sir Robert Walpole and lord Townshend, and the papers of Sir Luke Schaub, together with other documents of importance.

Sydney Papers.—I am indebted to lord SYDNEY for the communication of letters which belonged to his father, the honourable Thomas Townshend, second son of Charles viscount Townshend, and the confidential friend of Sir Robert Walpole. The kindness of lord Sydney,

and his brother, Charles Townshend, Esquire, has also supplied many anecdotes derived from the conversation of their father.

Waldegrave Papers.—To the Countess of WALDEGRAVE, I am obliged for submitting to my inspection the dispatches of her grandfather James, first earl of Waldegrave, during his embassies at Vienna and Paris, from 1727 to 1740. Among other points of secret history, they detail many interesting conversations with Cardinal Fleury, and with Chauvelin, keeper of the seals. They contain also various letters to and from Sir Robert Walpole, of the most private and confidential nature, which are printed in the Correspondence.

In addition to these, I have to enumerate other communications made in the most liberal and obliging manner, and to offer my grateful acknowledgments.

Harrington Papers.—To the earl of HARRINGTON, for the correspondence of his grandfather William Stanhope, first earl of Harrington, who was envoy and embassador at Madrid, plenipotentiary at the congress of Soissons, and secretary of state. Also for some papers of Charles Stanhope, elder brother of the first earl of Harrington, who was private and confidential secretary to earl Stanhope, and secretary to the treasury under the earl of Sunderland. This collection supplied me with many interesting

letters, which relate to the schism in the administration in 1716, and a confidential correspondence between Newcastle and Harrington, previous to the dismission of lord Townshend.

Grantham Papers.—To lady GRANTHAM, for the papers of Sir Thomas Robinson, first lord Grantham, who was confidential secretary to lord Walpole, during his embassy in France, and envoy and plenipotentiary at Vienna. These documents comprise an interesting account of the negotiations and transactions between Great Britain and the house of Austria, during a period of eighteen years.

Poyntz Papers.—To STEPHEN POYNTZ, Esquire, for various communications from the papers of his father Stephen Poyntz, Esquire, confidential secretary of lord Townshend, envoy to the court of Sweden, and one of the plenipotentiaries at the congress of Soissons.

Keene Papers.—To BENJAMIN KEENE, Esquire, for the papers of his uncle Sir Benjamin Keene, so long, and with such distinguished eminence, envoy and embassador at Madrid.

Campbell Papers.—To ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, Esquire, for the papers of his grandfather, Archibald earl of Ilay, and duke of Argyle; in which I had the good fortune to find several original letters of Sir Robert Walpole.

Devonshire Papers. — To the late worthy and much regretted lord JOHN CAVENDISH, for several interesting letters, in the possession of the duke of Devonshire, written by Sir Robert Walpole, the marquis of Harrington, and Sir Robert Wilmot, to William duke of Devonshire, lord lieutenant of Ireland, a short time previous to the resignation of Sir Robert Walpole.

Etough Papers. — To JOHN PLUMPTRE, Esquire, for the papers of the Rev. Henry Etough, rector of Therfield, Hertfordshire. These papers form a valuable mass of intelligence. They contain sketches of the reigns of William, Anne, George the First and Second; numerous accounts of Sir Robert Walpole, which he obtained in conversation, either from the minister himself or Horace Walpole, the minutes of which, in various instances, he noted down. They comprise much information derived from Mr. Scrope, secretary to the treasury, and other persons whose authorities he constantly cites; and a long and interesting correspondence with Horace Walpole. Etough was a man of great research and eager curiosity, replete with prejudice, but idolizing Sir Robert Walpole. In the examination of these ample documents, I have only adopted such parts as were in my judgment entitled to full credit.

The following are the principal articles in this

collection, of which I have availed myself: "A Miscellany, being Minutes of several Conversations while Sir Robert Walpole, and when Lord Orford, on several Subjects, from 1734 to 1744, with some Particulars relating to his latest transactions.——" Minutes of a Conversation with Sir Robert Walpole, on the Attempt of Lord Bolingbroke and the Duchess of Kendal, to obtain his Dismission in 1727." Printed in the Correspondence.——" An imperfect Essay on the Character and Behaviour of the late Earl of Orford, addressed to the right honourable Horatio Walpole, Esquire."——" Minutes of two Conferences with Horatio Walpole at Putney, August 6th and 20th, 1752."——" Minutes of a Conversation with the right honourable Horace Walpole, Esquire, November 3, 1755."——" Observations on the Elections in 1734 and 41, relative to lord Orford."——" Minutes of a Conversation with Mr. Scrope, secretary to the Treasury, relating to the Arrangement of the new Ministry on the Accession of George the Second." Printed in the Correspondence.

Weston Papers.—To the Rev. CHARLES WESTON, prebendary of Durham, for communications from the papers of his father, Edward Weston, Esquire, under secretary of state; containing, among other interesting particulars, letters from Sir Robert Walpole and lord Townshend, on the arrival of the duke of Ripperda in England, and a manly remonstrance of lord

Townshend to the king, dissuading the journey to Hanover; which the reader will find in the Correspondence.

Onslow Papers.—To lord ONSLOW, for some very interesting remarks of speaker Onslow, on various parts of Sir Robert Walpole's conduct, with anecdotes of the principal leaders of opposition. Printed in the Correspondence.

Astle Papers.—To THOMAS ASTLE, Esquire, keeper of the records at the Tower, for various communications from his private collection of manuscripts; particularly, correspondence of the earl of Clarendon, during his mission at Hanover, and letters from secretary St. John to Drummond; which are printed in the Correspondence.

Stanhope Papers.—The schism in the Whig administration divided Walpole and Stanhope, and converted their long established friendship into bitter enmity. As the character of James, first earl of Stanhope, was severely arraigned by Townshend and Walpole, candour impelled me to apply to his representative, the present earl, for any documents in his possession, which might tend to vindicate the memory of his ancestor from those aspersions. This request was acceded to in the most liberal manner, and those papers have materially tended to elucidate the transactions of that period.

Midleton Papers.—I am indebted to lord MIDLETON for the papers of his grandfather, the chancellor of Ireland, which develope the history of Wood's patent, and comprise several letters from his brother Thomas Brodrick, chairman of the committee of secrecy in the South Sea inquiry, and of his son Saint John Brodrick; most of these are replete with the severest sarcasms and invectives against the minister.

Egremont Papers.—To the earl of EGREMONT, for the letters of lord Bolingbroke to his grandfather Sir William Wyndham, remarkable for that animation, elegance of style, plausibility of argument, and virulence of invective, which distinguish his writings. They contain the most severe animadversions on the conduct and principles of Sir Robert Walpole, and are filled with the most bitter reproaches against his measures: I have thought it my duty not to suppress a single paragraph which reflected on the administration of the minister.

Pulteney Papers.—To Sir WILLIAM PULTENEY, for the papers of his wife's father David Pulteney, commissioner of the board of trade, and lord of the admiralty, who became the strenuous opponent of Sir Robert Walpole, and wrote against him with great severity in The Craftsman.

Melcombe Papers.—To HENRY PENRUDDOCKE WYNDHAM, Esquire, for the Papers of George Dodington, lord Melcombe, from which I have selected several private letters, animadverting, with much acrimony, on the conduct and system of Sir Robert Walpole, extolling the principles and directing the views of that opposition which drove him from the helm.

To Dr. DOUGLAS, bishop of Salisbury, I am indebted for several interesting particulars, derived from daily conversations, during an intimate intercourse for many years with his friend and patron the earl of Bath. While I gratefully acknowledge my obligations to this learned and highly-respected prelate, for much valuable information during the progress of this work, I feel extraordinary gratification in reflecting that the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole have derived assistance from the friend of his great opponent, William Pulteney.

Governor POWNALL claims my grateful acknowledgments for the communication of a very ingenious and able essay on the conduct and principles of Sir Robert Walpole, which places the minister in a new point of view. It is inserted in the Correspondence.

With the assistance of these extensive sources

of information, I have been enabled to elucidate many parts of secret history, either totally unknown, or wholly misrepresented, and to trace the motives of action which influenced the conduct of the minister, and directed the views of the British cabinet.

I have not been biassed by the prejudices of party hatred or party affection. I have always considered the connections and principles of the persons from whom I derived political information, and after duly weighing all the circumstances, have equally avoided the extremes on either side.

It has naturally been my principal object to trace and discuss those events, which personally relate to Sir Robert Walpole, either in his public or private character, and in which he was either directly or eventually concerned. In the course of my inquiries, and in the perusal of the numerous documents to which I have had access, I obtained information of various collateral circumstances, and of numerous characters, which though they did not immediately attach to the life of the minister, yet were connected with the transactions which he either influenced or directed. Hence I have been led to make occasional digressions, in order to elucidate interesting but obscure points of history. I have also introduced biographical memoirs of eminent persons, who were either the opposers or favourers of the minister, whose characters the papers and documents in my possession have enabled me to illustrate.

Fully aware of the uncertainty of tradition, I have been extremely cautious to confine myself to the narrowest limits. I have never once adopted the hearsay of a hearsay, and have paid no attention to any anecdotes or facts except from those who derived their information from persons of veracity, that were themselves engaged in the transactions of the times, and who authenticated their narratives.

I have, in general, quoted my authorities, and though in some instances I have omitted to enumerate them, that I might avoid the appearance of affectation, yet I can safely aver, that I have not advanced a single fact in the whole work, of the truth of which I have not been convinced by the most unexceptionable evidence.

In a few instances I have collected the substance of the minister's speeches from parliamentary minutes in his own hand-writing. From these memorandums I have particularly drawn his speeches against the peerage bill, on proposing the excise scheme; in opposing Sir John Barnard's plan for the reduction of interest; and in reply to the motion made by Sandys to remove him.

I have scrupulously avoided all allusions to the transactions which are now passing before us, lest I might have been tempted to make my work the vehicle of panegyric or invective, and have fallen into an error not uncommon with speculative writers, who judge of remote facts by recent circumstances, and affectedly assimi-

late the events of past ages with the transactions of the present day.

I cannot close this Preface without paying a just tribute of gratitude to my ingenious friend JOHN ADOLPHUS, Esq. for the advantages which I have derived from his literary assistance in preparing these Memoirs for the press.

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A GENEALOGI

OF TH

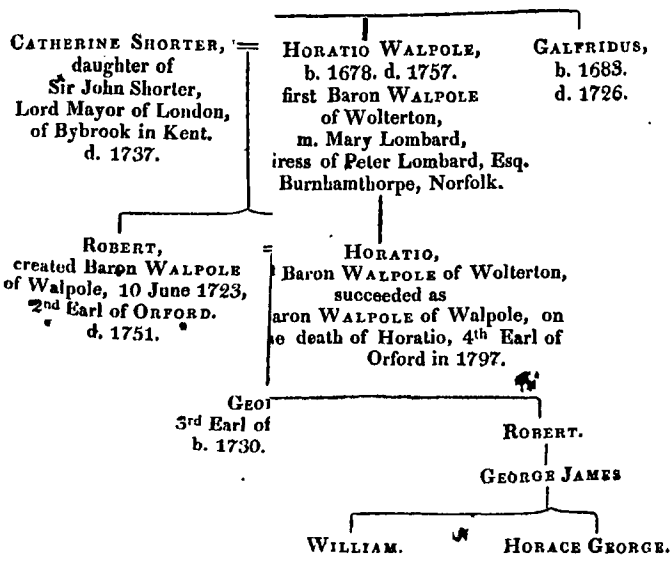
WALPOLE

WITH THE DE

OF

SIR ROBERT

E.


CATHERINE SHORTER, daughter of Sir John Shorter, Lord Mayor of London, of Bybrook in Kent. d. 1737.
HORATIO WALPOLE, b. 1678. d. 1757. first Baron WALPOLE of Wolterton, m. Mary Lombard, iress of Peter Lombard, Esq. Burnhamthorpe, Norfolk.
GALFRIDUS, b. 1683. d. 1726.
ROBERT, created Baron WALPOLE of Walpole, 10 June 1723, 2nd Earl of ORFORD. d. 1751.
HORATIO, Baron WALPOLE of Wolterton, succeeded as aron WALPOLE of Walpole, on e death of Horatio, 4th Earl of Orford in 1797.
GEO 3rd Earl of b. 1730.
ROBERT.
GEORGE JAMES
WILLIAM.
HORACE GEORGE.

A Genealogical Table
of the
WALPOLE FAMILY,
WITH THE DESCENDANTS
of
Sir ROBERT WALPOLE.

(To face Page 1. Vol. I.)

REGINALD de WALPOLE,
Time of William the Conqueror.

Richard de Walpole.

Sir Henry de Walpole.

Henry Walpole.

Sir John Walpole.

Sir Henry Walpole.

Sir Henry Walpole,
Knight of the Shire, 9 Edw. II. 1316.

Henry Walpole, d. 1442,
bur. at Houghton.

Henry Walpole.

John Walpole.

Thomas Walpole, d. 1514.

Edward Walpole, d. 1557.

John Walpole, d. 1585.

Calibut Walpole, 1646, or 1648.

Robert Walpole, b. 1593. d. 1663. = Susan, daughter of Sir Edward Barkham, Lord Mayor of London.

Sir Edward Walpole, d. 1667. = Susan, daughter of Robert Crane.

Robert Walpole, b. 1650. = Mary, daughter of Sir Jeffery Burwell.

Horatio Walpole.

Catherine Shorter, daughter of Sir John Shorter, Lord Mayor of London, of Bybrook in Kent. d. 1737. = Sir ROBERT WALPOLE, Viscount Walpole, and Earl of Orford, b. 1676. d. 1745. = Maria Skerret, daughter of Thomas Skerret, Esq. d. 1738.

Mary, b. 1673, m. Sir Charles Turner Bart. of Warham, in Norfolk.

Dorothy, b. 1686, d. 1726, 2nd wife of Charles, 2nd Viscount Townshend.

Susan, b. 1687, d. 1763, m. Anth. Hammond, Esq. South Wotton, Norfolk.

Horatio Walpole, b. 1678. d. 1757. first Baron Walpole of Wolterton, m. Mary Lombard, coheiress of Peter Lombard, Esq. of Burnhamthorpe, Norfolk.

Galfridus, b. 1683. d. 1726.

Robert, created Baron Walpole of Walpole, 10 June 1723, 2nd Earl of Orford. d. 1751. = Margaret, daughter of Samuel Rolle, Esq. of Haynton, Devonshire.

George, 3rd Earl of Orford, b. 1730. d. 1791.

Sir Edward Walpole, Knight of the Bath. d. 1784, aged 78.

Horatio Walpole, 4th Earl of Orford. d. 1797, aged 79, in whom the Title of Orford became extinct.

Mary Walpole. d. 1732. m. George Visct Malpas, afterwards 3rd Earl of Cholmondeley.

Horatio, 2d Baron Walpole of Wolterton, succeeded as Baron Walpole of Walpole, on the death of Horatio, 4th Earl of Orford in 1797.

George, Viscount Malpas. d. 1764.

George James, 4th Earl of Cholmondeley, succeeded to the Estate and Seat at Houghton, on the Death of Horatio, 4th Earl of Orford.

George Horace, Viscount Malpas.

Robert.

George James

William.

Horace George.

MEMOIRS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

PERIOD THE FIRST:

From his Birth, to the Accession of GEORGE I.
1676—1714.

CHAPTER I.

1676—1701.

Family—Birth—Talents—Education—Country Pursuits—Marriage—Paternal Estate.

THE Ancestors of Sir Robert Walpole, who was the eighteenth male of his family, in a lineal descent, may be traced from the Conquest. They took their surname, according to the custom of those days, from the town of Walpole, in Norfolk, on the borders of Lincolnshire, where they had their residence, until one of them exchanged the family seat for Houghton, in the same county.*

* Annexed Genealogical Table. Edmonson's Baronagium. Collins's Peerage; Article, Earl of Orford. Documents among the Orford Papers.

Sir Edward Walpole, his grandfather, was elected member for the borough of Lynn Regis, in the convention parliament, assembled in April, 1660, and voted for the restoration of Charles the Second. As a recompence for his zeal in the royal cause, he was created Knight of the Bath. He was remarkable for his eloquence and weight in parliament; and once, on a warm altercation in the house, he suggested an expedient which was immediately adopted by both parties, for which Waller the poet, in a high strain of panegyric, ironically proposed that he should be sent to the Tower, for not having sooner composed the dispute when he had it in his power.* He died in 1667.

Robert, the eldest son and heir of Sir Edward Walpole, sat in parliament for the borough of Castle Rising, in the county of Norfolk, from the first year of William and Mary, till his decease in November 1700. He was deputy lieutenant, and colonel of the militia, in the county of Norfolk, and took as active a share as his situation and circumstances permitted in forwarding the Revolution. He considerably improved his estate by prudent management; educated a large family with much credit, and was held in great estimation by the Whig party, whose measures he appears to have uniformly supported. He had by his wife Mary, only daughter and heiress of Sir Jeffery Burwell, of Rougham, in Suffolk, nineteen children; of whom

ROBERT, afterwards SIR ROBERT WALPOLE* and EARL of ORFORD, the subject of these Memoirs, was the third son.

It seems to be an error not uncommon in mankind, to exalt the merit of favourite and eminent characters, by exaggerated encomiums, and to attribute solely to nature, what is usually the combined effect of nature, education and accident. The voice of friendship, admiration, or flattery, has declared, with a similar prejudice, that Sir Robert Walpole was born a minister. It was said of him, that he was endowed with a genius for calculation; and that the method which he adopted in settling accounts, was a mystery understood only by himself. Others of his admirers considered application in him as not necessary, because he knew every thing by intuition. But truth and impartiality reject such unqualified assertions; and the events of his early life will show that his natural talents, were rather solid than brilliant, and that his acquirements were the fruit of considerable industry.

He received an excellent education. He came early into parliament; spoke at first indifferently, until habit and practice rendered him an able debater. He was promoted to an office in the admiralty in the 28th year of his age; became secretary at war at thirty; was trained to business under Marlborough and Godolphin; and

* The early traits in the life of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE were principally communicated by his son HORACE, the late Earl of Orford.

managed the house of commons during the Whig administration. Being deprived of his place, he distinguished himself in opposition; was persecuted by the Tories, and considered as a martyr by the Whigs. He promoted, with unabated zeal, the Protestant succession, and was rewarded for his services with the place of paymaster of the forces, by the new sovereign, whom he had assisted in fixing upon the throne. Thus educated and inured to business, having thus served under government, and acted in opposition, he was placed at the head of the treasury. In this situation, adored by his family, beloved by his friends, and esteemed by his party, he was courted and idolized. Facility for transacting business, and talents for calculation, were considered by his fond admirers as the gift of nature, when, in reality, they were the result of education, assiduity, and experience.

ROBERT WALPOLE was born at Houghton on the 26th of August, 1676.* He received the

* There is great confusion, and difference of opinion, with regard to the age of Sir Robert Walpole. He himself writes, in his letter to general Churchill, June 24th, 1743; "No disgrace attends me since *Sixty-seven*." According therefore to this account he must have been born in 1675, and died aged 69, or in his 70th year. His son Horace, the late Earl of Orford, confirmed this account, and told me that, had he lived till the 26th of August, 1745, he would have been 70.——The register at Houghton gives no account of his birth or time of baptism, but his death is thus recorded: A. D. 1745. The right honourable earl of Orford died March 18, and was buried the 25th, in the 68th year of his age.—At the bottom of the same page, in another hand, is, "The great Sir Robert Walpole, earl of Orford, departed this life, the 18th March, 1744, aged 68 Years, and was interred the 25th Do."——According to

first rudiments of learning at a private seminary at Massingham, in Norfolk, and completed his education on the foundation at Eton, under Dr. Roderick* and Mr. Newborough, who were distinguished for their knowledge, and raised the school to a high degree of eminence. Walpole

Collins's Peerage, and the Gentleman's Magazine, he was 71 at the time of his death, which would place his birth in 1674.——The register of his birth by his mother settles the dispute. The reverend Horace Hammond, rector of Great Massingham, in Norfolk, great Nephew to Sir Robert Walpole, to whom I am obliged for the above-mentioned extracts from the parish register, favoured me with an account of the births of all the children of Robert and Mary Walpole, registered in her own hand, in a book which is in his possession.

AGE OF MY CHILDREN.

Susan	was born	6th June	1672.
Mary	——	8th June	1673.
Edward	——	23d June	1674.
Burwell	——	6th August	1675.
Robert	——	26th August	1676.
John	——	3d September	1677.
Horatio	——	8th December	1678.
Christopher	——	20th February	$16\frac{79}{80}$.
Elizabeth	——	24th March	$16\frac{80}{81}$.
Elizabeth	——	16th October	1682.
Galfridus	——	15th March	$16\frac{83}{84}$.
Anne	——	6th April	1685.
Dorothy	——	18th September	1686.
Susan	——	5th December	1687.
Mordaunt	——	13th December	1688.
A boy	still-born	8th April	1690.
Charles	——	30th June	1691.
William	——	7th April	1693.
A daughter	still-born	20th January	$16\frac{94}{95}$.

* Dr. Roderick was upper master, and Mr. Newborough lower master, when Walpole was admitted into Eton school. In 1690 Mr. Newborough became upper master, and Mr. Stephen Weston lower master. Communicated by Dr. Goodall, Provost of Eton College.

was naturally indolent, and disliked application; but the emulation of a public seminary, the alternate menaces and praises of his masters, the maxim repeatedly inculcated by his father, that he was a younger brother, and that his future fortune in life depended solely upon his own exertions, overcame the original inertness of his disposition. Before he quitted Eton, he had so considerably improved himself in classical literature, as to bear the character of an excellent scholar. A peculiar fondness for Horace,* marked his good sense, and even after his retirement from public life, when he had long discontinued his early studies, he was by no means deficient in the knowledge of the Greek language. His talents for oratory began to develop themselves at a very early period; for his school-master being informed that several of his former scholars who had been educated at Eton, and particularly St. John, had distinguished themselves for their eloquence in the house of commons, replied, "But I am impatient to hear that Robert Walpole has spoken, for I am convinced he will be a good orator."

On the 22d of April, 1696,† he was admitted

* He was accustomed to give his son, the late earl of Orford, subjects for his Latin compositions, and he almost always took them from Horace. Lord Orford used to recollect two themes which were applicable to his situation as first minister.

Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est.
Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum.

† Register of King's College.

a scholar at King's College,* in the university of Cambridge. During his residence, he was seized with the small-pox, which was of a most malignant sort; and he continued for some time in imminent danger. Doctor Brady,† the famous historical advocate for the Tory principles of the English constitution, who was his physician, said to one of the fellows of King's College, warmly attached to the same party; "We must take care to save this young man, or "we shall be accused of having purposely neg- "lected him, because he is so violent a Whig." It was indeed principally owing to his kind and assiduous attention that Walpole recovered. Notwithstanding Brady's political prejudices, he was pleased with the spirit and disposition of his young patient, and observed with affectionate attachment, "His singular escape seems to be a "sure indication that he is reserved for important "purposes." In the latter period of his life, when the prediction had been fulfilled, this anecdote was frequently related by Walpole, with a complacency, which showed that it had made a deep impression on his mind, and proved his satisfaction at the recollection of an event that seemed to anticipate his elevation.

At college he formed a strict intimacy with

* A collection being made, after he was prime minister, for the new building at King's College, he subscribed £.500; and on receiving the thanks of the provost and fellows, he replied, "I deserve no thanks, I have only paid for my board."

† Brady, author of "An Introduction to the old English History," in 1 vol. fol.; and, "A complete History of England," in 2 vol. fol.

Hare and Bland, who were members of the same foundation, and in every situation of life, showed an affectionate regard for the friends of his early youth. He raised Hare, who afterwards ably distinguished himself in defending the measures of the Whig administration, to the bishopric of Chichester, and promoted Bland to the provostship of Eton College, and deanry of Durham.

On the death of his elder surviving brother, in 1698, becoming heir to the paternal estate, he resigned his schclarship on the 25th of May. He had been originally designed for the church, and was frequently heard to say, with the confidence which characterises an aspiring mind, that if such a destination had taken place, instead of being prime minister, he should have been archbishop of Canterbury. Fortunately the superstructure of his education was completed before the death of his brother; for after that event he relapsed into his natural indolence, and the impulse of necessity being removed, no longer continued to prosecute his studies for the purpose of pursuing a liberal profession. His father also assisted in withdrawing him from literary occupations. He immediately took his son from the university, endeavoured to fix him in the country, and made him attend to the improvement of his estate: with that view he employed him once a week, in superintending the sale of his cattle at the neighbouring towns, and seemed ambitious that his son should become the first grazier in the country. His father was of

a jovial disposition, and often pushed to excess the pleasures of the table: the hospitable mansion of Houghton was much frequented by the neighbouring gentry, and the convivial temper of Walpole accorded with the scenes of rustic jollity. At these meetings the father occasionally supplied his glass with a double portion of wine, adding, "Come Robert, you shall drink twice, while I drink once: for I will not permit the son, in his sober senses, to be witness to the intoxication of his father." His mornings being thus engaged in the occupations of farming, or in the sports of the field, of which he was always extremely fond, and his evenings passed in festive society, he had no leisure for literary pursuits.

On the 30th of July, 1700, he married, in Knightsbridge Chapel,* Catherine, daughter of Sir John Shorter, lord mayor of London, a woman of exquisite beauty and accomplished manners; and the amusements of London succeeded the more active employments of the country. On the 28th of November, 1700, his father died, and Walpole inherited the family estate, the rent-roll of which exceeded £.2,000 a year.† It was charged with his mother's join-

* Register of Knightsbridge Chapel, which the reverend D. Lysons, the learned author of the Environs of London, was so obliging as to search at my request.

† Among the Orford Papers is a document in the hand-writing of his Father, showing the amount of the estate, of which the substance is submitted to the reader, as a proof that the reproaches cast

ture, and with the fortunes of the younger children which amounted to £.9,000. His wife's dowry discharged this incumbrance, and his mother's jointure fell in by her death in 1711.

The death of his father threw him into the busy scenes of public life, when the violent spirit of party gave an impulse to his political exertions; at the moment when the demise of Charles the Second, king of Spain, fixed the attention of Europe, and excited general apprehensions in England, lest the united dominions of the whole Spanish monarchy should center in a prince of the house of Bourbon.

upon him by his opponents, of being a needy adventurer, were unfounded.

June 9, 1700. A particular of my estate within the county of Norfolk, as it is now let:

	£.	s.	d
Manor of Houghton	352	11	—
Manor of Birch Newton	80	—	—
Manor of Great Bircham	277	—	—
Manor of Bircham Toft	101	—	—
of Darlingham	253	11	4
of Sislem	304	16	8
of Westwich	180	10	—
of Glostnops in Ledgett	100	—	—
of Harply	100	11	—
In Burrough, near Yarmouth	18	—	—
Small lands and tenements	50	—	—
Total in Norfolk	1,818	—	—
In Suffolk:			
Manor of Hasset	300	—	—
Farm of Cavendish, &c.	51	—	—
Total	2,169	—	—

CHAPTER 2.

1700—1701.

Elected Member of Parliament—Sketch of the important Transactions during the Two last Parliaments of King William—Act of Settlement in favour of the Protestant Succession and Family—Principles and Conduct of the Leaders at the Revolution—Ineffectual Endeavour of William to extend the Act of Settlement in favour of the Hanover Line, virtually introduced by the Act for disabling Papists—Artful Management of William to procure the Extension of that Act on the Death of the Duke of Gloucester.

ON the decease of his father, Walpole was elected member for Castle Rising, and sat for that borough in the two short parliaments, which were assembled in the two last years of the reign of king William.

The death of Charles the Second, king of Spain, in the month of October, 1700, the acceptance of his testament by Louis the Fourteenth, in breach of the second partition treaty, and the quiet accession of Philip duke of Anjou to the crown of Spain, acknowledged by England and the United Provinces, were events which had preceded the meeting of the parliament in which Walpole first sat. The act of settlement in favour of the electress Sophia; the violent conduct of the Tory house of com-

mons in the impeachment of Somers and the Whig lords; the death of James the Second; the acknowledgment of his son as James the Third, by Louis the Fourteenth; the indignation of the English at that event; the successful manœuvres of William to rouse the spirit of the nation against France, and to obtain the concurrence of the Tories to a Continental war; the second grand alliance; the dissolution of the Tory parliament and ministry; the choice of a Whig administration and parliament; the declaration of war against France; the attainder of the pretended prince of Wales; the abjuration oath; the death of William, at the moment when he had given an impulse to the grand combination; were the important events which agitated the public mind during the two last parliaments of his reign. To give a detail of these complicated and interesting transactions is not the province of a writer of memoirs, but must be left to the historian of the times; unless they influenced the future conduct and policy of the Minister, whose life I am attempting to delineate. With this view, it may not be improper to state the circumstances which preceded and accompanied the passing of the act of settlement, and induced all parties to adopt that measure, which secured to the house of Hanover the throne of Great Britain, and had so strong and permanent an influence on the subsequent conduct of Walpole.

When the arbitrary conduct of James the

Second against the constitution and religion had raised the indignation of England, and when our great deliverer William, prince of Orange, had co-operated with the nation in driving that monarch from the throne; the leaders of the convention parliament acted with a spirit and wisdom well becoming the arduous situation of affairs, and with a temper which accommodated itself, as occasion required, to the customs and prejudices of the nation. While they set aside that absolute and indefeasible right, which it was averred no conduct, however tyrannical, could violate, and laid down the doctrine of resistance in cases of extreme necessity, they dreaded the evils of an elective monarchy, and guarded against the future establishment of a republican form of government. When they found it necessary to break the hereditary line of descent, they made the deviation as small as possible, and no more than the exigency of circumstances required. With these principles constantly in view, they declared that James, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution, had abdicated the government, and thereby rendered the throne vacant.

The throne being thus declared vacant, and the son of James being supposed illegitimate, the next in order of succession was Mary, eldest daughter of James. But as the nation owed its deliverance from arbitrary power to William, the convention departed from the regular line by declaring him king, jointly with his wife

Mary, and by vesting in him the sole administration of government. This appointment was a deviation from the system of hereditary descent, dictated by imperious necessity, and confirmed by gratitude; yet as Mary and Anne both consented to devolve their right to the crown on William, the convention may be said only to have confirmed the transfer. Excepting this single deviation, the succession was continued after the death of William and Mary in the natural order: in the children of Mary; in Anne; in the children of Anne; and in the children of William, who being the son of Mary, eldest daughter of Charles the First, was, after Anne, the next in the line of hereditary descent.*

In 1689, the first parliament summoned by William and Mary confirmed the act of settlement; but the king, ever anxious to promote the tranquillity of his subjects, and to prevent future troubles should all the persons named in that Act die without issue, thought it indispensably necessary to extend it to the next heirs in the Protestant line. He ordered, therefore, bishop Burnet to propose in the house of lords an amendment to the bill of rights, nominating Sophia, dutchess of Hanover, and her issue, next in the succession. Being carried by the lords without opposition, it was thrown out in the house of commons by the Republicans, high

* Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. 1. page 212.

Tories, and Jacobites, who all united on this occasion against a bill which equally confounded their respective hopes, under the specious pretence that such a nomination was unjust, because it would preclude all those who were prior in lineal descent to the dutchess, even should they become Protestants.* The birth of the duke of Gloucester, having still farther removed the apprehensions of a popish successor, William did not choose to press the nation in favour of the Hanover line, but was satisfied in obtaining his views by a more concealed, but not less effectual method. Instead of naming Sophia, a clause was annexed to the bill of rights, disabling all Papists from succeeding to the crown, or such as should marry Papists. This clause first opened the prospect of succession to the house of Brunswick, without naming it; because that family, being the first among the Protestant descendants of James the First, became, from the perpetual exclusion of Catholics, next in expectancy to the persons named in the act of settlement. It passed, in both houses, without opposition or debate, notwithstanding the well-known disinclination of the majority in the lower house; and the management of the whole affair reflects high honour on the judgment and temper of William.

Such was the order of succession when Walpole came into parliament; at which time the recent

* Burnet, vol. 2. p. 15. Tindal, vol. 13. p. 144.

death of the duke of Gloucester alarmed the nation with the dread of a Popish successor, and enabled William to carry into execution his favourite measure of extending the act of settlement to the house of Hanover. Having been deceived by Louis the Fourteenth in the negociations for the second partition treaty, he had dismissed the Whig ministers, who had rendered themselves obnoxious by signing it, and formed a Tory administration, at the head of which were Rochester, Godolphin, and Harley, who, from being a partisan of the Whigs, now sided with their opponents.

William well knew that the greater part of the Tories had consented with the utmost reluctance to the breach of hereditary descent at the Revolution, and had almost uniformly opposed his endeavours in favour of Sophia, as tending, in their opinion, to overturn the system of hereditary monarchy, so long cherished by the constitution of England. He also well knew that the whole body of the real Whigs earnestly promoted the transfer of the crown to the succession in the Protestant line; but, at the same time, he was aware that among those who called themselves Whigs, were many Republicans, who would oppose it; from a hope, that if the persons named in the act of settlement should die, means might be found to establish their favourite form of government. He had long perceived that the Whigs themselves could never have carried the bill, in opposition to the united force of the

Tories, Jacobites, and Republicans; but he had now divided the Republicans from the Tories, by placing the latter in power, and being secure of the Whigs, he thought it a favourable opportunity to make the extension of the act of settlement with the ministers the price of their elevation. He accordingly recommended in his speech from the throne, February 1701, a further provision for the succession of the crown in the Protestant line; notwithstanding this acquiescence of the Tories, he could not carry his point without the consent of the princess Anne. With a view therefore to gain her concurrence, he permitted insinuations to be thrown out, as if he intended to make a cession of his crown to the son of James the Second. These artful rumours alarmed both the princess and her favourite, and extorted her consent to the act of settlement.*

But although the Tories had promised the king to promote the extension of the act of settlement, before they came into power, and had even permitted a recommendation of it to be introduced into the king's speech, yet the method in which they conducted the business, proved their wish to obstruct it. The speech was made on the 11th of February; the commons, in their address, took not the least notice of that part which related to the Protestant succession; and it was not until the 3d of March that the house resolved itself into a committee

* Cunningham, vol. 1, p. 185. Somerville's History of King William, p. 545.

to take it into consideration. Harley observed, that the haste in which the government was settled at the revolution, had prevented the nation from requiring such securities from the future sovereign, as would have prevented much mischief, and he hoped they would not fall into the same error; he therefore moved, that before the person was named, a provision should be made by a committee for the security of the rights and liberties of the people. This proposal being accepted, the resolutions of the committee were laid before the house, on the 12th of March, specifying certain restrictions,* to be ratified by every future sovereign.

* 1. All things relating to the well-governing of this kingdom which are properly cognizable in the privy-council, by the laws and customs of this realm, shall be transacted there, and all resolutions taken thereupon shall be signed by such of the privy council as shall advise and consent to the same. 2. No person born out of the kingdoms of England, Scotland, or Ireland, or the dominions thereunto belonging, or who is not born of English parents beyond the seas, although naturalized or made a denizen, shall be capable to be of the privy council, or a member of either house of parliament, or to enjoy any office or place of trust. 3. No such person shall have any grant of lands, tenements, or hereditaments from the crown to himself, or to any others in trust for him. 4. In case the crown shall hereafter come to any person not being a native of the kingdom of England, this nation shall not be obliged to engage in any war for the defence of any dominions or territories not belonging to the crown of England, without the consent of parliament. 5. Whoever shall hereafter come to the possession of the crown, shall join in communion with the church of England. 6. No pardon under the great seal shall be pleadable to an impeachment in parliament. 7. No person who shall hereafter come to the possession of the crown, shall go out of the dominions of England, Scotland, or Ireland, without the consent of parliament. 8. No person who has an office or place of profit under the king, or receives a pension from the crown, shall be capable of serving as a member of the house of commons. Judges commissions shall be made quam

Burnet, whose reflections on the Tories cannot be admitted without extreme caution, observes, that these limitations were designed to disgust the king, and to raise disputes between the two houses, by which the bill might be lost;* and although some of these restrictions were just, and highly beneficial, this observation is fully justified by the subsequent proceedings of the commons. So many delays were still made, that the patience of the Whigs began to be exhausted, and one of their party was going to propose the electress Sophia. Harley could only prevent this measure by bringing on the question. With a view, however, to cast a ridicule on the act of settlement, he employed Sir John Bolles, who was disordered in his senses, to propose the bill.† The business was so contrived, that this man thus deranged in his intellects, was, by the forms of the house, appointed one of the committee who were instructed to prepare the bill, was twice placed in the chair, and twice gave in the report. The first reading was postponed to the first of April, the second to the seventh, and it did not finally pass till the fourteenth of May.* Thus the act of settlement, which was to secure the religion and constitution of the country, was received with so much coldness and contempt, that several members, during the sitting of the committee, indecently

diu se bene gesserint, and their salaries ascertained and established: But, upon the address of both houses of parliament, it may be lawful to remove them.——*Journals of the house of commons.*—Tindal.

* Vol. 2. p. 271. † Burnet.—Journals.

quitted the house, and so many delays were purposely made, that more than three months elapsed, from the day in which it was recommended from the throne till it was sent up to the lords. It passed that house after a slight opposition from the marquis of Normandy. Being carried back to the commons, it was received in a thin house, and several reproachful expressions were uttered against it by some of the members.*

Notwithstanding the ungracious manner in which this measure was promoted, the most zealous Whig cannot deny that the nation is highly indebted to the Tories for one of the limitations in the act of settlement, which the Whigs, with all their ardour for civil and religious liberty would not have ventured to propose, because it was considered by the king as an insult on his conduct and administration. The restriction to which I allude is, that no foreigner, though naturalized, should be a member of the privy council, or of either house of parliament, or should enjoy any office or place of trust, or have any grant of lands from the crown. These necessary precautions, naturally suggested by the experience of those evils to which the nation had been already exposed, in consequence of raising a foreign prince to the throne, proved highly beneficial in preventing, on the accession of George the First, the admission of German denizens into the councils and cabinet of England.

* Burnet—Tindal.—Oldmixon.

CHAPTER 3.

1701—1702.

Walpole becomes an active Member of Parliament—Is upon various Committees, and Teller on several important Questions—Supports the Whigs—Seconds the Motion for extending the Oath of Abjuration to ecclesiastical Persons—Death and Character of King William.

ALTHOUGH neither the Journals of the House of Commons, nor any contemporary accounts, nor the traditions of his family, record that Walpole made any specific motion, or spoke in favour of the act of settlement, yet there is no doubt that he joined the Whigs in promoting it.

The Journals prove, that he soon became a very active member. His name appears upon several committees, and in one for privileges and elections, so early as the 13th of February, only three days after the meeting of the parliament in which he first sat. He was particularly attentive to the business which related to the county of Norfolk; and zealously promoted the questions which concerned the trade of Norwich. He made the report from the committee on the bill for erecting hospitals and workhouses in the borough of Lynn, and for better employing and maintaining the poor; and was ordered to carry it up to the house of lords.

He is also mentioned as teller on several important questions which related as well to the trade and revenues of England, as to questions of party. On the 23d of April he was one of the tellers against the bill proposed by the Tories for the better preservation of the Protestant religion, and for preventing the translation of bishops from one see to another. His high veneration for the character of Lord Somers, and his zealous attachment to his party, naturally induced him to oppose the motion for his impeachment, and it is not improbable that he afterwards took a considerable part in his defence. Being young and unexperienced at the period when that question was moved, he gave only a silent vote; but he made a judicious remark, which proved his sagacity: it was, that the zeal of the warmest friends is oftentimes more hurtful to the person whose cause they espouse, than the bitterest accusations of the most inveterate opponents. The able defence spoken by Somers in the house of commons, made so deep an impression, as induced Walpole to be of opinion, that if the question had been immediately put, the prosecution would have been withdrawn. But the accusers of Lord Somers, foreseeing this event, made such inconsistent observations, and used such intemperate expressions, as provoked his friends to reply. According to the account of this debate, given by Walpole, Harcourt began with extremely fallacious, but as plausible remarks, as the subject could admit. Cowper's indignation moved

him to reply, which occasioned the prolongation of the debate, at the end of which what had been significantly and fully urged by Somers, was in a great measure forgotten. But had the impetuous zeal of his friends been restrained, and his enemies been permitted to proceed without interruption, as long as they thought fit, Walpole apprehended they would have not been able to divide the house.* He was one of the tellers in favour of the question, that the engrossed replication to the answer of Lord Somers to the articles of impeachment, should be read. On which motion, he divided with 90 against 140.

On entering into parliament, a due diffidence of his own powers repressed his zeal; and he formed a resolution not to speak until he had attained more experience, and some degree of parliamentary knowledge: but his prudence and caution were overcome by the powerful passion of emulation.

During his continuance at Eton, he had been the rival of St. John, who was a year younger than himself. The parts of St. John were more lively and brilliant; those of Walpole more steady and solid. Walpole was industrious and diligent, because his talents required application. St. John was negligent, because his quickness of

The general account of this debate is accurately stated in Tindal's Continuation of Rapin, by the author, Dr. Birch, on the express authority of Sir Robert Walpole himself. I have added other particulars from the authority of Etough. He derived his information from a conference which he had with Sir Robert Walpole October 31, 1734.

apprehension rendered less labour necessary. When both came into public life, this emulation did not cease; and as they took different parties, opposition kindled their zeal. St. John soon distinguished himself in the house of commons, and became an eloquent debater; repeated encomiums bestowed on his rival, roused the ardour of Walpole, and induced him to commence speaker sooner than he at first intended. It does not, however, appear at what time, or on what occasion, he first spoke in the house of commons; all that is known on that subject is, that the first time he rose, he was confused and embarrassed, and did not seem to realize those expectations which his friends had fondly conceived. At the same time another member made a studied speech, which was much admired. At the end of the debate, some persons casting ridicule on Walpole as an indifferent orator, and expressing their approbation on the maiden speech made by the other member, Arthur Mainwaring, who was present, observed in reply, "You may applaud the one, and ridicule the other, as much as you please; but depend upon it, the spruce gentleman who made the set speech will never improve, and Walpole will in time become an excellent speaker."* The prediction of Mainwaring was soon verified. Walpole took a still more active part in the debates of the ensuing parliament, which met on the 30th of December, 1701; which being composed of a majority of Whigs, and acting under a Whig

* From Charles Townshend, Esq.

administration, whom William had again called to the helm of government, was more congenial to his political opinions. Yet, notwithstanding the preponderance of their interest, the Tories gained a victory in the choice of a speaker, of which lord Townshend takes notice in a letter to Walpole, who was detained at Houghton by the illness of his wife: "Mr. Harley has carried it from Sir Thomas Littleton, by a majority of four votes, which gives his party great encouragement, and is no small mortification to the Whigs."* Walpole did not long delay taking his seat in the new parliament.

At this period, Louis the Fourteenth having, on the death of James the Second, acknowledged his son king of England, under the title of James the Third, William ordered his embassador, the earl of Manchester, to quit France, and in a speech to the new parliament, told them, "He need not press them to lay seriously to heart, and to consider what further means might be used for securing the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, and extinguishing the hopes of all pretenders, and their open and secret abettors." Animated by this exhortation, the commons addressed the crown not to make peace with France, until reparation was made for the great indignity offered by the French king, in declaring the pretended prince of Wales king of England, Scotland, and Ireland. The Whigs having now the power, abundantly testified their inclination to confirm the act of settlement by

* December 30.—Orford Papers.

every means best calculated to favour the exclusion of the dethroned family. Accordingly, a bill for attainting the pretended prince of Wales, passed in both houses with little opposition. Another for the security of the king's person, for the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, and for extinguishing the hopes of the pretended prince of Wales, was carried with equal success. A clause in this bill, well known under the title of the act of abjuration, enjoined all subjects to swear allegiance to the king, by the title of lawful and rightful king, and his heirs, according to the act of settlement: this oath was to be taken by all persons in any office, trust, or employment, and to be tendered by two justices of the peace, to any person whom they should suspect of disaffection. Even this clause met with no opposition, and the great struggle was confined to the question, whether the oath should be compulsory or free. The enemies of the Protestant succession could not venture to oppose the oath of abjuration, but exerted their whole strength to render it null, by contending, that it ought not to be imposed by force, but left to the option of every person to take or to decline it. The contest on this occasion was so great, and the two parties so equal, that this important clause was only carried in a full house by one voice, 188 to 187.

This great victory being thus obtained, it was thought proper to extend the oath to all ecclesiastical persons, and members of the universities. Sir Charles Hedges accordingly moved for an

addition to the clause, which should comprehend all clergymen, fellows of colleges, and schoolmasters. Walpole having, during his residence at Cambridge, observed many instances where masters and fellows of colleges had never taken the oath of allegiance, seconded the motion for this amendment, and it was carried without a division; so effectual was the triumph of the Whigs, over the friends of the dethroned family. Horace Walpole alludes to his conduct on this memorable occasion, in a letter from Cambridge,* in which he describes the consternation of the nonjurors, on being compelled to take the oath of abjuration, and the indignation which they expressed against his brother, for his zeal in promoting the Protestant succession.

When the bill was moved in the house of lords, the Tories proposed, and warmly supported an additional amendment, excusing the peerage from the obligation of the oath. Nottingham particularly distinguished himself in its favour, and spoke with so much agitation, that the tears fell from his eyes.† But the singular absurdity and injustice of exempting the upper house from the same strictness of engagements to which the lower house had consented, met with the fate which it deserved: The motion was negatived. Although the Tories could not carry their question, they succeeded in adding two amendments, with a view still further to protract the business. The opponents of the Protestant suc-

* Feb. 28, 1701-2. See Correspondence.

† Etough's Papers.

cession in the lower house, coincided with their intentions; for the bill sent down to the commons, with these amendments, was not returned to the lords till the 3d of March. It was there detained several days, and was not sent back to the commons till the 7th, on a Saturday,* in the hope of deferring it till the Monday; and as the king then lay upon his death bed, almost at the last extremity, such a delay would have been fatal. But the precautions of William, and the vigilance of the Whigs defeated their well-laid scheme. The commons adjourned till six in the afternoon; in this interval, the king, who was so weak that he could not hold a pen in his hand, stamped his name to the commission for passing the acts. When the commons met, a message was brought from the lords, importing that the king had signed the commission, and desiring their attendance. The speaker, accordingly, accompanied as usual with other members, went out, and returned with the report, that the royal assent had been given to the bill, and to two other acts. No event ever happened in a more critical moment; for William expired between eight and nine on the following morning. The last exercise of his kingly power was, his assent to the oath of abjuration, emphatically styled, by the friends of the dethroned family, his *cursed legacy*. "Thus," observes a contemporary † author, "he confirmed to posterity, with his expiring breath, that liberty, civil and reli-

* Journals of the Lords and Commons.

† Toland.

gious, for which during his life he had so often fought in the field; which he was indefatigably augmenting and establishing in his parliament; which he was continually bringing to perfection in his councils, and which, on his accession to the throne, he promised (as he faithfully performed) to secure against all future attempts to subvert it."

CHAPTER 4.

1702—1710.

Accession of Anne—Walpole supports the Whigs—Makes a Motion in Opposition to Sir Edward Seymour—Distinguishes himself in the Proceedings on the Aylesbury Election—Noticed by Earl Godolphin, and the Duke of Marlborough—Appointed one of the Seven Council to the Lord High Admiral—Secretary at War, and Treasurer to the Navy—Reconciles Godolphin to the Whigs—Nominated one of the Managers for the House of Commons, upon the Prosecution of Sacheverel—His Speech, and Publication on that Occasion.

IN the first parliament of queen Anne, Walpole was returned for Lynn Regis, where his family had long possessed a permanent interest. For this borough he was regularly chosen, until he was created earl of Orford.

Although he had spoken frequently in the house of commons, yet the first time in which he appears upon record, on a public * question, in the parliamentary debates, was on the 23d of December 1702, when Sir Edward Seymour having carried a resolution to bring in a bill for the resumption of all grants made in the reign of king William, and applying them to the service of the Public; Walpole moved, that all

* Notitia Parliam.—Lists of the House of Commons in Chandler's Proceedings of Parliament.

the grants made in the reign of the late king James, should also be resumed; but his motion was negatived.* The proposition of Sir Edward Seymour, directed against the Whigs, who had received the principal grants from king William, was supported by a Tory ministry, and easily passed through a Tory parliament; and the counter motion by so young a member, levelled against the grants made to the Tories, and in opposition to one of their great leaders, sufficiently proved that Walpole was rising into consequence, and had decidedly enlisted himself under the banner of the Whigs.†

* Journals of the House of Commons. Tindal, v. 15. p. 474.

† As a proof of Walpole's activity, and an indication of the principles and party which he supported, I have extracted, from the Journals of the House of Commons, the several questions in which he was teller, besides those already mentioned, until he was appointed secretary at war.

1702.—February 19th: Against a clause to be added to a bill, for the further security of his majesty's person and government, that persons who take upon them offices, shall not depart from the communion of the church of England.—February 26th: Against delaying to read the report of a committee, to consider further of the rights, liberties, and privileges of the house of commons.—March 3d: In favour of a motion for an instruction to a committee on the bill for granting to his majesty divers subsidies.—1703. January 5th: For an amendment to an address, in reply to the queen's message.—1704.—November 14th: Against leave to bring in a bill for preventing occasional conformity.—December 14th: Against the said bill.—December 19th: Against an instruction to a committee, that they have power to receive a clause for the qualification of justices of the peace, in a bill for the better recruiting her majesty's land forces, and the marines.—1705. January 16th: For a motion, that a bill be committed for appointing commissioners to treat of an union between England and Scotland, &c.—January 17th: For a question, that towards the supply, a duty be laid upon all goods imported from the East Indies, Persia, and China, into

In the celebrated cause concerning the Aylesbury election 1704, Walpole distinguished himself in an eminent degree, and attained an high estimation with his party. Complaints of great partiality and injustice in the election of members of parliament, had been continually urged against the sheriffs in the counties, and returning officers in the boroughs, who often found pretexts for rejecting those electors who voted against the members whom they espoused. When these disputes were brought before the commons, the house seldom entered into the

England, prohibited to be used in England, and from thence to be exported to Ireland, or any of the plantations.—January 27th: Against a bill, to prevent persons who are entitled by their offices to receive any benefit by public annual taxes, from being members of parliament, while they are in such offices.—February 21st: For an amendment in a bill for prohibiting all trade and commerce with France.—March 14th: Against a clause in an act for preventing the further growth of popery.—December 8th: Against a Motion for a committee to consider of the resolution of the lords, declaring those who should insinuate the church to be in danger, enemies to the queen, the church, and the kingdom.—December 19th: For the second reading of a bill, for better security of her majesty's person and government, and the succession in the Protestant line.—1706. February 4th: For an amendment made by the lords in the same bill.—February 13th: Against a clause to prevent irregular listing of men, to be added to the bill for recruiting the army and marines. —1707. February 10th: For an amendment to a bill for securing the church of England, as by law established.—February 22: Against a motion for an instruction to the committee on the Bill of Union, that the subjects of this kingdom shall be for ever free from any oath, test, or subscription, within this kingdom, contrary to or inconsistent with the true Protestant religion of the church of England, as is already provided for the subjects of Scotland, with respect to their Presbyterian government.—December 12th: For an amendment to the above bill.—1708, January 29th: For the adjournment of a debate on the English forces in the service of Spain and Portugal, in 1707.

merits of the cause, but usually decided in favour of the candidate who voted with the majority. It was no easy matter to apply a remedy for such a glaring abuse; because all parties, when oppressed, made heavy complaints, and when certain of a majority forgot the grievance against which they had before so loudly exclaimed, and even excused themselves on the necessity of retaliation. At length, after many attempts to obtain justice, Ashby, a freeman, prosecuted William White, constable of Aylesbury, for having refused to admit his vote at the election of burgesses. A verdict, with damages, was found in favour of Ashby, but reversed by the court of Queen's Bench. The cause being carried by appeal to the house of lords, the order of the Queen's Bench was set aside, and the verdict given at the assizes confirmed. The Tories, who formed the majority of the commons, considering these proceedings as an encroachment on their privileges, and esteeming that house the judge of such questions as related to the election of its members, the solicitor-general, Sir Simon Harcourt, moved, "That the sole right of examining and determining all matters relating to the election of members to serve in parliament, except in such cases as are otherwise provided for by an act of parliament, is in the house of commons; and that neither the qualification of the electors, or the right of the persons elected, is elsewhere cognizable or determinable." The question was debated with uncommon

vehemence and ability; on the side of the Tories principally by Harley, St. John, Harcourt, and Sir Edward Seymour; on the side of the Whigs, by Sir Joseph Jekyll, Cowper, King, the marquis of Hartington, and Walpole. He took a short, but sensible part in the debate; and after arguing with much judgment against the motion, proposed to omit that part of it which concerned the qualification of the electors. This amendment, seconded by the marquis of Hartington, was negatived by a majority of only eighteen, and the original question carried.

Yet, although the Whigs were defeated, their arguments produced a strong effect on the public mind. A general discontent prevailed against the severity of the commons, for committing to Newgate Ashby, and four other inhabitants of Aylesbury, who had likewise sued the returning officers; for preventing their having a Habeas Corpus, for addressing the queen not to permit a motion for a writ of error in the house of lords, which would have released them from prison, and for declaring all solicitors and counsel, who should prosecute or plead in any such cause, guilty of a high breach of privilege. The final decision of this important controversy was suspended by the perseverance of the lords, who declared, that a writ of error was a matter of right, not of grace; by the steady determination of the queen not to obstruct, in favour of the house of commons, the course of judicial proceedings in the courts of law; and by the manly opposition of lord chief justice Holt.

These contrary pretensions produced a violent quarrel between the two houses, which was terminated by the dissolution of parliament.* Although the question was never revived; yet from this time, the house of commons considered itself as the sole judge of the qualifications of electors, and of all other matters which related to the return of members. It was principally owing to these resolutions, that the decisions, in regard to controverted elections, were seldom regulated by the merits of the case, but became questions of personal or political expediency; nor was this abuse corrected, until the act, known by the name of Grenville's Bill, was passed in 1770, which referred to a committee, chosen by ballot, and acting upon oath, the final decision in all contested elections.

At this period of his life, Walpole began to be held in high estimation by the great leaders of the Whigs, and was particularly noticed by the duke of Devonshire, the earl of Sunderland, lord Halifax, and lord Somers. Among the persons of his own age, with whom he entered into habits of close intimacy, were James, afterwards earl Stanhope, Spencer Compton, afterwards earl of Wilmington, the marquis of Hartington, eldest son of the duke of Devonshire, whose family uniformly proved themselves his firm friends and adherents, and viscount Townshend, who was then just beginning to acquire political

* See Journals of the Lords and Commons.—Raymond's Reports, p. 938.—Proceedings in the great case of Ashby and White, and in the case of the Aylesbury men.—Chandler.—Tindal,

importance. But Walpole owed his rise and consequence less to his connections, than to his own talents and situation. A member of parliament of a great Whig family, whose interest brought in two representatives,* and who had distinguished himself in the debates for sound sense, manly argument, and perspicuous eloquence, could not long remain unnoticed. Nor was his reputation solely confined to the party whose cause he so warmly espoused. The lord treasurer Godolphin,† who cannot be accused of partiality to the Whigs, discerned his rising abilities, favoured him with his immediate protection, and strongly recommended him to the patronage of the duke of Marlborough.

The firm adherence of Walpole to his party, was, however, a hindrance to his preferment, as long as Godolphin continued to act with the Tories; but no sooner had the leaders of the Whigs regained their popularity, and appeared secure of a majority in the ensuing parliament, than the lord treasurer brought several into office, and opened to others a prospect of preferment. In March 1705, the duke of Newcastle was declared privy seal in the room of the marquis of Normanby; and among the inferior places of government, Walpole was appointed one of the council‡ to prince George of Den-

* One for Castle Rising, and one for Lynn Regis.

† From the late earl of Orford.—Etough's Summary Account of Sir Robert Walpole.

‡ Walpole Papers.—MS. account of Sir Robert Walpole, in King's College Cambridge.—Collins's Peerage.

mark, lord high admiral of England. This first service was attended with many disagreeable circumstances: Great mismanagement both at home and at sea, was imputed to the navy board. Admiral Churchill, brother to the duke of Marlborough, possessed at this period, the greatest influence at the admiralty, and was accused, with some of the other members, of negligence and corruption. To him the merchants attributed their losses; their loud complaints were heard in both houses, and zealously supported by the principal Whigs. Walpole endeavoured to excuse and mitigate the conduct of the council, and gave a proof of the spirit that marked the decision of his character. Being reproached by one of his friends for acting against his party, he replied, "I never can be so mean to sit at a board, when I cannot utter a word in its defence."* But although he conceived, that it was unbecoming in him not to defend those with whom he sat in council, and although he well knew that their faults had been exaggerated, yet he found sufficient abuses to call for immediate correction. He laboured therefore to prove to the board, the necessity of assuming a more decisive conduct; and he so far ingratiated himself with his fellow counsellors,† that his advice was followed, and his plans were usually adopted.

The union of spirit and prudence, in so young

* From the late lord Walpole, to the late earl of Hardwick.

† Etough's Account of Sir Robert Walpole.

a man, still further recommended him to the notice of Godolphin and Marlborough, who appear to have placed in him the most implicit confidence, and to have availed themselves of his advice and assistance on many important occasions.

At the meeting of the new parliament in October 1705, Walpole seconded the motion, made by lord Granby, to nominate Smith speaker, who was favoured by the Whigs, against Bromley, who was proposed by the Tories. The contest was carried on with great heat and animosity between the two parties; but the majority in favour of Smith proved the triumph of the Whigs.

Walpole had already exerted himself with considerable success, in cementing this union between Godolphin and the Whigs; but he now came forward with still greater effect, and strenuously exhorted his patron to obtain the zealous co-operation of that powerful and popular party. He urged, that the leaders of the Tories in the house of commons, were directed and influenced by his enemies and rivals; and censured the spirit of bitterness and violence, of umbrage and persecution, which had been lately predominant in all their measures; he represented, in the strongest terms, that the Tories, although they had been roused by the general energy of the nation to approve and second the grand alliance, were yet averse to the continuance of the war with France; and that on the contrary, the Whigs were not only sincere, but enthusiasts in

their zeal for the depression of the house of Bourbon.

His representations were listened to with attention, and gradually had their effect; Godolphin availed himself of his intimacy with Devonshire, Halifax, Somers, and Townshend, to arrange the coalition, which afterwards took place. If the union of the Treasurer with this party was not so complete and uniform as some of the zealous Whigs expected, the failure proceeded from his apprehensions of the queen's displeasure, and his inclination to the principles of the Tories.

In consequence of these repugnant principles, the administration was a motly mixture of Tories and Whigs, perpetually at variance, and secretly caballing to supplant each other. At first the Tories seemed predominant in the cabinet; but the ascendancy of the Whigs soon appeared, from the nomination of Cowper to be lord keeper of the great seal, in the room of Sir Nathaniel Wright. The leaders of the Whigs, however, perceiving that the queen still favoured the Tories, in December, 1706, forced Charles earl of Sunderland into the office of secretary of state, in the place of Sir Charles Hedges, in direct opposition to the avowed wish of the queen, and in contradiction* to the secret

* Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough. It appears from the correspondence in the Marlborough Papers, that both the duke of Marlborough and lord Godolphin, considered lord Sunderland as of too violent a temper to fill the office of secretary of state; and that they effected his nomination principally in compliance with

inclinations both of Godolphin and Marlborough. The appointment of Sunderland was a decided victory, and from that moment the whole administration adopted the principles, and followed the measures of the Whigs. Harley, however, still continuing the other secretary of state, endeavoured to create an independent interest, and was favoured by the influence of Mrs. Abigail Hill; who, in the capacity of a bed-chamber-woman, had gained the confidence of the queen. His intrigues being discovered, after some unavailing struggles, he was dismissed from the office of secretary of state, and succeeded by Henry Boyle, afterwards lord Carleton, who proved his friendship for Walpole, by appointing his brother, Horace, to the office of private secretary. The subsequent nomination of lord Somers to the presidentship of the council in November, 1708, and of lord Orford, in the ensuing year to the head of the admiralty, completed the triumph of the party.

Walpole himself was not overlooked in the change. He was selected by Marlborough as the most proper person to succeed his favourite, St. John, in the delicate office of secretary at war;* an office which required a person of no

the demands of the Whig leaders, whose assistance they found necessary to carry on the government. Even then, it was not, however, without extreme difficulty, that the two ministers overcame the reluctance of the queen.

* The office of secretary at war was afterwards given to Cardonnel, confidential secretary to the duke of Marlborough; but as he was abroad with the duke, Walpole did the business of his office until his return.

less prudence than ability. During the absence of Marlbrough, the secretary at war transacted the business of the department personally with the queen; he was to correspond officially and confidentially with the commander in chief; and had the difficult task to conciliate the capricious temper of the duchess of Marlborough, who interfered in all business, governed her husband with the most absolute sway, and who now treated the queen with those marks of disrespect, which accelerated the fall of the Whig administration, and finally occasioned her own disgrace.

On the decease of Sir Thomas Littleton, in 1709, Walpole was appointed treasurer of the navy, which office he held for a short time, with that of secretary at war.

In addition to his parliamentary abilities, Walpole endeared himself to Godolphin by activity and punctuality in business, order and precision in accounts, great knowledge of finance, and the most engaging manners. The treasurer admitted him into his most secret councils, occasionally employed him in the delicate office of composing the speeches from the throne, and from the time of Harley's resignation, committed to him the management of the house of commons.* Indeed Walpole merited this confidence by the active share which he took in parliamentary business, particularly in the discussion on Spanish affairs, provoked by the earl of

* Etough's Account of Sir Robert Walpole.

Peterborough, with the design of casting an odium on the military talents and services of the duke of Marlborough.* Nothing will place the prudent and conciliating character of the young senator in a stronger light, than that Godolphin and Marlborough, who never cordially coalesced with the Whigs, should take into their confidence, one who had proved himself, and still continued to prove himself, so ardently attached to that party; at the same time he was so far from forfeiting the favour of the Whigs, that he was equally beloved and trusted by their leaders.

In 1710, Walpole was appointed one of the managers for the impeachment of Sacheverel, and principally conducted that business in the house of commons. To bring Sacheverel to a trial, and to distinguish him with an impeachment, managed in the most solemn manner, for a miserable performance, which, without such notice, would have speedily sunk into oblivion, was an inexcusable degradation of the dignity of the house of commons, and affords a striking instance of the height of folly and infatuation to which the spirit of party will carry even the wisest men. It is well known that this measure was suggested by Godolphin, who was severely satirised in the sermon under the name of Volpone, and that it was warmly opposed by Somers and some of the Whig lords. Walpole, in conformity to their opinion, endeavoured to prevail on Godolphin to desist from the prosecution;

* Mr. Vernon to the duke of Shrewsbury, January 5, 1707-8.

but all arguments were ineffectual. The minister, in this instance, laid aside his usual circumspection, and irritated by a passion unworthy of the occasion, insisted with so much vehemence, that he finally extorted the consent of his colleagues in office.

Walpole, acting in conformity to their resolutions, conducted himself on the occasion with no less prudence than spirit. It fell to his share to support the first article of the charge; that Sacheverel had suggested and maintained, "That "the necessary means used to bring about the "happy revolution, were odious and unjusti- "fiable; that his late majesty, in his declaration, "disclaimed the least imputation of resistance, "and that to impute resistance to the said revo- "lution, was to cast black and odious colours "upon his late majesty and the said revolu- "tion."

On this delicate subject, which it is so difficult to define and restrain within the proper bounds, while the doctrine of resistance is allowed, in cases of extreme necessity, he spoke with equal precision, moderation, and energy, and drew the happy medium between the extremes of licentiousness and rational liberty; between a just opposition to arbitrary measures, and a due submission to a free and well-regulated government.* While he reprobated, in

* This speech written in his own hand, is still extant among the Orford Papers. The printed speech, in the account of Sacheverel's trial, is taken from it verbatim. Burke has quoted a sensible passage of it in his Appeal from the new to the old Whigs, p. 65.

the strongest terms, the doctrines of divine indefeasible right, and passive obedience, he by no means encouraged, even in the slightest degree, any vague notions of resistance in undetermined cases, or upon trivial motives; but established hereditary right as the essence of the British constitution, never to be transgressed, except in such instances as justified the revolution.

The result of this ill-judged trial was far different from the event which Godolphin and his friends weakly expected. The triumph of the Tories was evident from the lenity of the sentence, which only ordered, that the sermon should be burnt by the common hangman, and suspended Sacheverel from preaching during three years. The unpopularity of the ministers was highly increased; the inclination of the queen, in favour of their opponents, was ostentatiously manifested; the populace was inflamed; and the consequence of this act of imprudence and precipitation was, the downfall of those who hoped to find, in the condemnation of Sacheverel, the condemnation of Tory principles, and the establishment of their power.

It may not, perhaps, in this place, be improper to observe, that the fatal and mischievous consequences which resulted from the trial of Sacheverel, had a permanent effect on the future conduct of Walpole, when he was afterwards placed at the head of administration. It infused into him an aversion and horror at any interposition in the affairs of the church, and led him to

assume, occasionally, a line of conduct which appeared to militate against those principles of general toleration, to which he was naturally inclined.

Soon after the removal of the Whig administration, Walpole published a pamphlet* on this remarkable trial, intituled, Four Letters to a Friend in North Britain, upon the publishing the Trial of Dr. Sacheverel. The first letter states the particulars which preceded the trial; the second, those which accompanied it; the third, those which followed it; and the fourth displays the consequences. The purport of this publication was, to prove in clear and familiar language, and by a plain, but strong deduction of reasoning, that the abettors of Sacheverel were the abettors of the Pretender; and that those who agreed with him to condemn such resistance as, dethroned the father, could have no other meaning than the restoration of the son.

* This pamphlet is erroneously attributed to Arthur Mainwaring, by Tindal, and the Biographia Britannica. See Royal and Noble Authors; Article, Earl of Orford.

CHAPTER 5.

1710.

Intrigues and Cabals which occasioned the Removal of the Whig Administration—Walpole holds a confidential Correspondence with the Duke of Marlborough, Lord Townshend, and Horace Walpole—Laments the disunion of the Whigs—Rejects the Offers and despises the Threats of Harley—Refuses to take a Part in the new Administration.

WALPOLE now began to enjoy, in the possession of an honourable and lucrative office, the reward of his able and uniform conduct, and had the pride of seeing his country successful beyond the example of former ages, since the days of Elizabeth, under a great and wise administration, in which he bore an active part. Marlborough, Godolphin, Somers, Orford, Sunderland, Wharton, Cowper, Halifax, and Townshend, occupied the first posts of government, were united in the same cause, acted with the same views, and promoted the honour and advantage of England by the most vigorous and spirited measures. But he did not long feel this satisfaction, for at the very moment when the country was reaping the fruits of their wisdom, foresight, and energy, the ministry was removed. Had not this change taken place, the king of France must have accepted the terms of peace

offered by England, and unequivocally compelled his grandson, Philip, to renounce the crown of Spain. St. Simon* calls the intrigues which introduced a Tory administration that saved France, *les miracles de Londres*. The king of Prussia,† also speaking of Marlborough, says, "What! Hoechstedt, Ramilies, Oudernarde, Malplaquet, were not able to defend the name of that great man; and even victory itself could not shield him against envy and detraction? What part," he adds "would England have acted without that true hero? he supported and raised her, and would have exalted her to the pinnacle of greatness, but for those wretched female intrigues, of which France took advantage to occasion his disgrace. Louis the Fourteenth was lost, if Marlborough had retained his power two years more." In fact, the removal of the Whig ministry retarded, instead of accelerating the peace, because it encouraged Louis the Fourteenth to break the congress of Gertruydenberg, threw the queen entirely into his power, and the prediction of Marlborough, in a letter‡ to Walpole, was eventually verified; "If the schemers are fond of a peace, they are not very dexterous, for most certainly what is doing in England, will be a great encouragement to France for continuing the war."

There never was any event in the annals of

* Memoires Secrets du Regne de Louis XIV, par Louis duc de St. Simon.

† Dialogues des Morts—Marlborough, Eugene, Lichtenstein.

‡ See Correspondence, June 23d, 1710.

this country attended with more disgraceful consequences to England, or followed by more fatal effects to Europe in general, than the dismission of those great men, who formed that glorious and successful administration in the reign of queen Anne, called, by way of distinction, the Whig administration.

Our regret at their fall is still further heightened from the consideration, that it was occasioned by the overbearing temper of a mistress of the robes,* and principally effected by the petty intrigues of a bed-chamber-woman,† against her benefactress. The surprising influence which the duchess of Marlborough had acquired over the weak and irresolute mind of the good queen Anne, is well described in that extraordinary apology of her conduct, which the duchess gave to the public. We there find a princess of the most placid temper, fascinated by the captivating manners of an artful, but agreeable woman; a queen, imbued with high notions of regal dignity, and a most exact observer of forms, throwing off all etiquette, and corresponding with her favourite, under the fictitious names of Morley and Freeman. We find the duchess, after having engaged the affections of her mistress by the most assiduous attention, relapsing into gross neglect, and gradually sinking in favour. We find her at the same time either not perceiving, or striving to conceal from others, and even from herself, the decline of her ascen-

* Duchess of Marlborough.

† Abigail Hill, Mrs. and afterwards lady Masham.

dancy, and increasing the disgust of the queen by her rude and intemperate behaviour. Unfortunately, the duchess of Marlborough had so much credit and power with the duke, her husband, and Godolphin, that to remove her it became necessary to remove the ministry. The artful and cautious manner by which Mrs. Masham supplanted the duchess of Marlborough, is also related in this apology, which may be called a manual of court intrigues; and her cabals with Harley, are detailed in the writings of Swift, who derived his information on that subject, from unquestionable authorities.

The Whigs were beginning to lose their popularity, when the trial of Sacheverel raised a ferment in the nation, and excited a general outcry against them. The ministry, and particularly the duke of Marlborough, were accused of protracting the war for their own interests; and this calumny was urged so boldly and repeatedly, that it was finally believed. The terms also, which the British plenipotentiaries attempted to exact from Louis the Fourteenth, though strictly consonant to true policy, and founded on the principles laid down at the commencement of the war, were declared illiberal, and only advanced with the intention that they should be rejected.

From an impartial review of the numerous papers, to which I have had access, and from a diligent comparison of the political writings of those times, I feel the strongest conviction, that the ministry were sincere in proposing the terms

of peace at the congress of Gertruydenberg; that they were even anxious to lower the demands of the Dutch, and make them as moderate as were consistent with the security of Europe, and that they were sanguine in their expectations that Louis the Fourteenth, circumstanced as he then was, would accede to them. It also appears, from the Diary of Lord Cowper, that he was the only one of the ministers who harboured a doubt on the subject, and that by expressing that doubt he incurred the indignation of Godolphin.* Before and during the

* 23d Janry. 1709, Sunday, lord treasurer at his house, read duke Marlborough's letter, dated abot 15 days before, from Hague; that Buys and 3 of the Burgrs of Amsterdam, and the Pensioner had recd sometime since, by overtures of peace from France, viz' to quit Spain and the West Indies, and to give a barrier to states in Flanders, that 'twas a great secret, known only as above; that the Pensioner said he should be ruined if known he had kept it from the states so long. Lord treasurer said, he shew'd it me by queen's order; I advis'd, and it was agreed only to put the propo-sals more particularly, and at large, as soon as possible; several intermediate debates in cabinet, shew'd by lord treasurer.

April 12, the following letter from duke Marlborough, Hague, April 19, 1709. The deputys of States Genl were with me yesterday abot 2 hours, the which time was spent upon the subject of their barrier. After I had given them all the assurances I thought necessary of the intentions and inclinations of the queen and English nation, of concurring with them in what might be reasonable for their barrier, I did endeavour to cure them of any jealousy they might have of my being particularly concerned. I hope it has had a good effect with 'em; however, I have done all I can, and shall do so to keep them in good humour, if possible. The inclosed is what they desire for their barrier. It incloses what might be thought a great kingdom. I hope to persuade them from some of it; so that I beg very few may see it: but when I have done all that may be in my power, I shall then send it to the secr, so that it may come regularly to her majesty, and the cab. counc. Mons. Rouillie's messenger returned last night, but I am told he desires two days to decypher his dispatches; so that Tuesday will be the

trial of Sacheverel, Harley was admitted, by the introduction of Mrs. Masham, to several private interviews with the queen, in which he endeavoured to persuade her to dismiss the ministry, but as she was of a timid, procrastinating disposition, he had great difficulty in succeeding. Not being able to prevail upon her to take a bold step, he artfully led her, by insensible degrees, to the accomplishment of his scheme. With this view, he persuaded her to consult the duke of Shrewsbury,* whom he had previously gained, and in whom she placed great confidence on these points; "Would the public credit suffer by the change of administration? Could that measure be carried into effect without a dissolution of parliament? or would that dissolution be attended with danger? Could a peace be nego-

soonest I shall be able to give you an account of this matter. This is so critical a time, that I dare not be of any opinion: but I tremble when I think that a very little impatience may ruin a sure game. Barrier, Dendm^{d}, Château de Ghent, Dame, Ostend, Newport, Furnes, Knocq, Ipres, Menin, Lisle, Tournay, Condé, Mons, Valenciennes, Maubeuge, Charleroy, Namur, Luxemburgh, Liere, Haut-Geldre en propre, permission to fortify Hall, S^{t} le Demer, the head of Flanders, with the forts on the Scheld, Huy, Leige, and Bon.

Note, during the remaining transaction of the intended peace, which was laid in all its steps before whole cabinet, lord treasurer, lord president Somers, and all other lords, did ever seem confident of a peace. My own distrust was so remarkable, that I was once pfectly chid by the lord treasurer, never so much in any other case, for saying such orders would be proper if the French king signed the preliminary treaty. He resented my making a question of it, and said there could be no doubt, &c. For my part, nothing but seeing so great men believe it, could ever incline me to think France reduced so low as to accept such conditions.—Lord Cowper's *Diary*; Hardwicke Papers.

* Life of the Duke of Shrewsbury.

tiated with safety to the queen, and with honour to the allies?"

The duke of Shrewsbury having given his opinion in the affirmative, and supported the queen in her resolution, Harley persuaded her to appoint earl Rivers lieutenant of the Tower, in opposition to the recommendation of Marlborough,* in January 1710, and to bestow a regiment, vacant by the death of the earl of Essex, on colonel Hill, brother to Mrs. Masham. As this promotion was highly disagreeable to the duchess of Marlborough, and must tend to lessen the duke's weight and authority in the army, he remonstrated in person, and urged his objections in such a manly and spirited manner, as displeased the queen, and induced her to answer, that he would do well to advise with his friends. Godolphin having no less ineffectually represented to her, that the duke's long and faithful services deserved a more favourable treatment, Marlborough retired in disgust to Windsor, and wrote a high spirited letter, in which, after stating his readiness to obey her commands, he expressed his regret that all his services could not protect him from the malice of a bedchamberwoman, and requested instant permission to retire. Before the queen had received this letter, she became apprehensive lest the resignation of the duke at this critical juncture, should cause discontents in the nation, and alarmed at the threats of Sunderland, to propose in the

* Swift's Memoirs relating to the Change in the Queen's Ministry, v. XV. p. 20.

house of lords the removal of Mrs. Masham, ordered Godolphin to inform Marlborough, that he might dispose of the regiment. In reply to his letter, she also expressed her concern at what had passed, and by this condescension engaged him to continue the command of the army in Flanders. But although the queen yielded in this instance, she persevered in her intentions, and soon afterwards gave unequivocal proofs of her resolution, by dismissing the marquis of Kent from the post of lord chamberlain, and conferring that office on the duke of Shrewsbury, without even the knowledge of the ministry.

During these transactions Walpole maintained an official and confidential correspondence with the duke of Marlborough, while absent from England; with Lord Townshend, plenipotentiary at the congress of Gertruydenberg; and with his brother Horace Walpole, private secretary to Lord Townshend. The whole of this interesting correspondence is not extant, but a sufficient part is still preserved* to do honour to the persons who were engaged in it, to throw a new light over the transactions of that period, and to illustrate the conduct of the ministers on that memorable occasion. It shews that their fall was owing no less to their own disunion, than to the intrigues of Mrs. Masham and Harley, and the opposition of the Tories. It plainly appears to have been the opinion of Walpole, that more active and decisive measures should

* See Correspondence, Period I.

have been pursued before the removal of Sunderland. He lamented the division of the ministry, the jealousy and coldness of Godolphin, and he conjectured that the disgrace of Sunderland, would be followed by the dismission of Godolphin and Marlborough, which they perhaps did not foresee.

Walpole was at that time in a subordinate situation. He had great obligations both to Godolphin and Marlborough, and he was joined in opinion with the Whig leaders. He had therefore a very delicate part to act; yet he wrote to Marlborough with great spirit and freedom; and even ventured to advise him not to offend the queen, by refusing obstinately to promote the husband and brother of Mrs. Masham; although such advice was most likely to offend, as in fact it did offend, the duchess of Marlborough. It appears also from these letters, that Marlborough and Godolphin tampered with the duke of Shrewsbury, and attempted, through his influence over the queen, to prevent the dissolution of the parliament; instead of boldly and manfully coming forward, they acted this underhand part, and by this dilatory and equivocal conduct, suffered Harley to divide and disunite the Whigs.

Perhaps it may be conjectured, that if on the dismission of Sunderland, which was sure to be followed by other changes, notwithstanding the positive assurances of the queen to the contrary, Godolphin and all his friends had instantly resigned their places, and if the duke of

Marlborough had given up his command of the army, so unanimous and bold a measure would have dispirited the queen, and alarmed the Tories. Under these impressions she could not have ventured to make a sudden and total change; she would probably have been checked by the apprehension of alienating the whole party of the Whigs, who then formed a large majority in parliament, and of disgusting the monied men, many of whom made the public credit personal to Godolphin, and scrupling to advance money upon the faith of the nation, offered it upon his single word.* She would have dreaded the remonstrances of the emperor and the Dutch, who justly considered the great successes of the war as principally owing to the military talents of Marlborough.

Such was the opinion of Walpole; and Sir Richard Temple, afterwards Lord Cobham, expressed his own sentiments in favour of a general resignation, in a spirited letter to his friend Walpole, with whom he then acted. But both Walpole and his brother Horace foresaw and lamented that the Whigs, instead of adopting this decisive and manly conduct, would be divided among themselves, and that several would listen to the insidious overtures of Harley. In effect, that artful minister flattered them with the hopes that the parliament would not be dissolved, and representing the danger which would threaten the constitution and religion, should their whole body desert the

* Life of the Duke of Shrewsbury.

queen; he used the remarkable expressions, "That a Whig game was intended at the bottom," and his great object would be to promote the Protestant succession.*

These representations and promises had a due effect, and helped to break the phalanx, which, had it remained firm and compact, must have been invincible.

Many of the Whigs hesitated, and delayed their resignation. Newcastle remained in power. The duke of Somerset was persuaded by the queen to keep his place, but affected to declare that he would not attend the privy council. Even Halifax, the champion of the party, is said to have availed himself of his long acquaintance with Harley, and to have so effectually treated with him in private, that none of his own relations were displaced.† Marlborough, who was over-ruled by the opinion of Godolphin and his Whig friends, retained the command of the army only to be dismissed with ignominy,‡ when his services were no longer thought necessary. Devonshire, Henry Boyle, Wharton, Somers, and Cowper, were among the few leaders who resigned with spirit and dignity.

Lord Chancellor Cowper, in particular, be-

* Cowper's Diary; Hardwicke Papers.

† Cunningham's History of Great Britain, vol. 2, p. 305. Letter from Horace Walpole to Etough, September 21st, 1752. See Correspondence, Period II.

‡ The manner in which Marlborough was treated by the new ministry, appears by two letters from Bolingbroke to Drummond. See Correspondence, Period I. 1711.

haved with unexampled firmness and honour. He rejected with scorn all the overtures which Harley made, in the most humble and supplicating manner, to induce him to continue in office. When he waited on the queen to resign, she strongly opposed his resolution, and returned the seals three times, after he had laid them down. At last, when she could not prevail, she commanded him to take them; adding, "I beg it as a favour of you; if I may use that expression." Cowper could not refuse to obey her commands; but after a short pause, taking up the seals, he said, that he would not carry them out of the palace, except on the promise, that the surrender of them would be accepted on the morrow. "The arguments on my side," to use the words of Lord Cowper himself, "and professions, and "the repeated importunities of her majesty, "drew this audience into the length of three "quarters of an hour."* On the following day, his resignation was accepted, and soon afterwards the seals were given to Sir Simon Harcourt.

Walpole acted on this occasion an honourable and disinterested part. In the wreck of this great administration, Harley, desirous of retaining in power several of the Whigs, with a view to counterbalance the credit of St. John and Harcourt, who already began to give him umbrage, endeavoured to gain Walpole. He made very flattering advances; told him that

* Cowper's Diary.

he was worth half his party,* and pressed him to continue in administration; but all his efforts proved ineffectual.

Harley finding at last that promises and flattery were employed without avail, had recourse to threats. Hawes, one of his confidential emissaries, who was afterwards receiver of the customs, informed Walpole, that the treasurer had in his possession a note for the contract of forage, indorsed by him; this insinuation was made in such a manner, as to imply, that if Walpole would come over to the new ministry, this note should not be produced against him. But, no less disdainful of menaces than before he was regardless of promises, he rejected all overtures. In a letter† written on the 19th of September, he observes to his friend General Stanhope; "I believe, in all probability, this "will be the last letter I shall write from this "office. We are in such a way here, as I cannot "describe. But you can imagine nothing worse "than you will hear. The parliament is not "yet dissolved, but this week will certainly "determine it. Dear Stanhope, God prosper "you, and pray make haste to us, that you may "see what you would not believe if it were told "you." On the 29th of September, a few days after writing this letter, he retired from the office of secretary at war.

Harley, however, was not repulsed by the first

* Letter to Mr. Pulteney, in answer to his Remarks, p. 47.

† Walpole Papers.

refusal of Walpole to support his administration. He had too much success with many of the Whigs, not to exert every effort to gain a man whose talents and eloquence he held in the highest estimation. He suffered him to continue in his place of treasurer of the navy, several months after the Whig ministry were entirely routed. He sent several messages, and held several conversations with him, to persuade him to moderate his opposition against the new measures; but his constant answer was, "Make "a safe and honourable peace, and preserve the "Protestant succession, and you will have no "opposition."*

* Etough's Papers; Horace Walpole to Etough, Oct. 14, 1752.

CHAPTER 6.

1711—1713.

Conduct of Walpole in Opposition—Ably defends the late Administration against the Charge of not accounting for the Public Expenditure—Accused of Breach of Trust and Corruption when Secretary at War—Committed to the Tower—Expelled the House, and incapacitated from sitting in the present Parliament—Visited by Persons of the first Distinction and Abilities—Writes an able Defence of himself.

AS Walpole dignified and supported an administration prosperous at home and glorious abroad, so when it was vilified and disgraced, he made animated replies to the attacks of a powerful and irritated party. During the intervening period, from his resignation to the death of queen Anne, he persevered in attachment to his late associates, and in harassing the new ministers, with great ability, both in and out of parliament. The first instance in which he appeared the champion of the fallen party was, upon the motion of an address to the queen. On this occasion, Walpole, whom Swift, in his History of the four last years of queen Anne, calls *one* Mr. Robert Walpole, proposed an amendment to the address, importing that no peace can be honourable to Great Britain and Europe, if Spain and the Indies are to be allotted to a branch of the house of Bourbon. This

clause, which had been carried by the lords, was negatived in the house of commons by a very great majority.

But his subsequent efforts were still more important and useful. The Tories having attempted to arraign the measures of their predecessors in office, turned their principal objections against the management of the revenue; a topic on which it was most easy to delude the public mind, by introducing a series of complicated calculations. This attack was principally levelled against Godolphin, who was accused of having profusely lavished the public money, and of not having accounted for the sums voted by parliament. When several of his former adherents in the house of commons deserted the ex-minister, a few defended his cause, and argued that the clamours raised against him, were merely the effusions of malice and calumny. The insidious attack was masqued under the plausible appearance of appointing a committee for examining and stating the public accounts. St. John employed all the powers of his eloquence, to show the necessity of taking into consideration the national expenditure; maintained that none but those who were enemies to their country, or who would themselves plunder the treasury, would be so bold as to oppose the inquiry; and supported his arguments with the most ardent affectation of zeal for the church and constitution.

No sooner had St. John ceased speaking, than Walpole rose with great spirit to vindicate his

patron from the imputation of corruption and malversation. He did not, however, condescend to make any reply to the hypocritical asseveration of St. John, in regard to religion, but confined his remarks to the subject of debate. He explained, in a calm and distinct manner, the accounts of the public expenditure, and confirmed the truth of his report, by the original receipts, and the most authentic testimonies. After having proved that the inquiry was founded on party animosity, he concluded by observing, "If he is accused, who cannot be charged with any crime, or any just suspicion of a crime, and whom the member who spoke last could neither fear nor hate, take heed lest the constitution should receive a wound through his sides. It is obvious, how much the multitude is under the influence of bribery, it is obvious, that the people of England are at this moment animated against each other, with a spirit of hatred and rancour. It behoves you, in the first place, to find a remedy for those distempers, which at present are predominant in the civil constitution, and unless you reject this inquiry with becoming indignation, I leave you to conjecture the situation to which this kingdom and government are likely to be exposed."* But the zeal and eloquence of Walpole had no effect; for the committee was appointed, consisting of persons principally Tories, and two notorious Jacobites; all previously determined to arraign the proceedings of the former administration.

* Cunningham's History of Great Britain, vol. 2. p. 349, 350.

The result of their inquiry was given in a most extraordinary report, which passed the house on the 12th of April, 1711, and was presented to the queen on the same day. After stating the great arrears due from public taxes, many embezzlements and scandalous abuses, evil mismanagement in public offices, and misapplication of parliamentary supplies, it boldly asserted, "That of the monies granted by parliament, and "issued for the public service to Christmas, 1710, "THERE REMAINS UNACCOUNTED FOR, THE "SUM OF £.35,302,107. FOR A GREAT PART OF "WHICH NO ACCOMPTS HAVE SO MUCH AS BEEN "LAID BEFORE THE AUDITORS; and for the "rest, though some accompts have been brought "in, yet they have not been prosecuted by the "accomptants, and finished." This unqualified reproach cast by the house of commons on the ex-ministers, had, for a short time, a prodigious effect in increasing the unpopularity of the Whigs. The people conceived it to be impossible, that the commons would advance such an assertion, without the most convincing proofs in its favour. A general belief gained ground, that the nation had been deceived and betrayed; fresh confidence was placed in the new ministers, who thus displayed their care for the people, and proved their capacity by contriving such means as might ascertain and discharge so vast a debt.

In opposition to these accusations, Walpole again came forth as the champion of his colleagues, and published "The Debts of the

"Nation stated and considered," and the "Thirty-"five Millions accounted for." In these publications, the author, who is called by Arthur Mainwaring, *the best master of figures of any man of his time*, gave, in a small compass, so accurate a scheme of the public debts, especially of the navy, together with the management of the revenues, the anticipations, the debts, and the reasons and necessity of them, as entirely undeceived the public, and refuted the calumnies which had been so industriously raised.* He proved, in a clear and satisfactory manner, that the debt of the navy, which was estimated at £.5,130,539, did not exceed £.574,000; and that of the whole £.35,000,000, all but £.4,000,000 had been accounted for.

Walpole had distinguished himself too ably in the house of commons, and by his publications had proved himself too warm a friend of the fallen ministry, and too powerful an adversary to the reigning administration, not to be singled out as one of the sacrifices to be made at the shrine of party vengeance. His expulsion, therefore, from the house of commons was resolved, and a meeting held by the leaders of the opposite party for the purpose of consulting on the means of proceeding. But the injustice of this act was esteemed so flagrant, and the imputations of guilt so faint and false, that many of those who had united to overturn the late admi-

* Conduct of Robert Walpole, esquire, from the beginning of the reign of queen Anne, to the present time, 1717, p. 29.—Tindal.—Oldmixon.

nistration, declared their aversion to this malicious design. Bromley,* however, removed their scruples, by declaring that the expulsion of Walpole was the *unum necessarium*, as they could not carry on the business, if he was suffered to continue in the house. It is no wonder, therefore, that his enemies, who could command a majority, should find a plausible pretext. The commissioners of public accounts laid a charge of venality and corruption against him, for forage-contracts in Scotland while he was secretary at war. They accused him of having taken, in two contracts, two notes of hand, one for 500 guineas, the other for £.500, the first of which had been paid, and a receipt given in his name, and of the other £.400 was paid. It appeared, from examining of the witnesses, on oath, that the contractors, rather than admit into their partnership Robert Mann, agent for Walpole, who, according to the tenour of the original agreement, reserved a share for a friend, to have a benefit of the fifth part, if not redeemed by the contractors with a sum of money, had preferred paying the 500 guineas and £.500; and that Mann had received the money for the first note, and had obtained the second note as a deposit for the sum specified to be paid.

In consequence of these reports, Walpole on the 17th of January, 1712, was heard in his own defence, but no particulars of his speech are preserved in the proceedings of parliament;

* Letter from Horace Walpole to Etough, September 21, 1751.

after he had withdrawn, a warm debate took place, which lasted till past ten at night. His friends, on this occasion, supported him with so much zeal, that the house was divided four times in the same sitting; and the ministers, who carried all political questions in this session with only a trifling opposition, gained the motions for his condemnation and expulsion, by a small majority. On the first division, in which Pulteney, then his intimate friend, afterwards his most bitter opponent, was teller, the amendment, to leave out the words, "and "notorious corruption," was negatived by a majority of 52. The main question passed in the affirmative by 57. The motion for committing him to the Tower by only twelve; and his expulsion was decreed by 22.* These small majorities sufficiently prove, either that Walpole possessed great personal influence in the house, or that many of the Tories considered his accusation a scandalous prosecution, and would not give their votes against him. The house, however, resolved, "That Robert Walpole, esquire, was guilty of a high breach of trust, and notorious corruption: That he should be committed prisoner to the Tower of London;" and on a subsequent motion, which was carried only by a majority of twenty-two votes, That he should be expelled.†

* 1st. 155 against 207. 2d. 148—205. 3d. 156—168. 4th. 148—170. The motion of censure against the duke of Marlborough was carried by a much greater majority, 270 against 165.—Journals.

† Journals.—Chandler's Debates.

On the next morning, Walpole surrendered himself a prisoner, and was committed to the Tower. It was expected, that he would have petitioned, and submitted himself to the censure of the house; but he refused making any concession, which could imply a consciousness of guilt, and he therefore remained a prisoner until the prorogation of parliament. In the mean time a new writ being issued for Lynn, he was re-chosen for that borough; but a petition being made against the return, by Samuel Taylor, the opposing candidate, the commons resolved, "That having been expelled this house for an high breach of trust in the execution of his office, and notorious corruption, when secretary at war, he was incapable of being re-elected a member to serve in the present parliament."*

While he remained a prisoner, he was considered as a martyr to the cause of the Whigs, and repeatedly visited by persons of the highest distinction and abilities, particularly by the duke and duchess of Marlborough, Godolphin, Sunderland, Somers, and Pulteney; and his apartment exhibited the appearance of a crouded levée.†

Walpole also proved his discretion and judgment in dissuading the duchess of Marlborough from publishing, in vindication of herself, a violent invective against the queen, accompanied

* Journals.—Chandler's Debates.

† Life of the Duke of Shrewsbury.—Annals of Queen Anne, for 1712, p. 140.—Conduct of Mr. Walpole.—Answer to a scurrilous Libel.

by several of her majesty's confidential letters. His advice was followed, but his honest freedom irritated that high spirited lady, and was a leading cause of her subsequent dislike and enmity.*

During his confinement, he had sufficient leisure to compose a clear and judicious vindication of himself, which was published under the title of "*The Case of Mr. Walpole, in a Letter from a Tory Member of Parliament to his Friend in the Country.*" In this masterly defence, he fully justifies himself, and appeals to evidence, taken upon oath, against the two principal charges, high breach of trust, and notorious corruption. In regard to high breach of trust, he shows that he had no advantage in the contracts; that he was not the only person concerned in making them, and that they were settled on the best and most advantageous terms to be obtained at the time. In reply to the charge of notorious corruption, he proves that a share in the contract being given to his friend, Robert Mann, the contractors preferred paying him a sum of money in recompence for his share; that the contractor who had negociated this bargain with Mann, dying, the other not knowing his name, made the note of hand payable to Walpole or order, for the use of his friend; that the note was endorsed by himself only for form, and the money received by Mann was for his own use and benefit, and that Walpole had not the least interest, directly or indirectly in this affair.

* Marlborough Papers. Endorsement of the duchess on the original draught of the Vindication.

I have been thus particular in stating the defence of Walpole, because it gives strong proofs of his innocence, and was never fairly and candidly answered; because some of the very persons who visited him in prison, and not only defended but applauded his conduct in this instance, afterwards, when in opposition, reproached him with the commission of this very crime, of which they had publicly and formally absolved him; and because some late writers,* of different principles, have stigmatized his memory, without having sufficiently examined his defence.†

This imprisonment has been called the prelude to his rise; and lord Lansdowne who was afterwards consigned to the same apartment, wrote these lines under Walpole's name, which he had left on the window:

> Good unexpected, evil unforeseen,
> Appear by turns, as fortune shifts the scene;
> Some rais'd aloft, come tumbling down amain,
> And fall so hard, they bound and rise again.‡

* See Smollet, vol. 2. p. 209. Macpherson's History, vol. 2. p. 537.

† For the investigation of this inquiry, in which the honour and character of Sir Robert Walpole is involved, I have consulted and compared the Journals of the House of Commons, Proceedings in Parliament, Burnet, Tindal, Oldmixon, Case of Mr. Walpole, Conduct of Robert Walpole, esquire, and An Answer to the Character and Conduct of Robert Walpole, esquire, with an exact account of his popularity, published in 1717. In this last publication, the author endeavours to refute Walpole's defence of himself, and to show that the money paid to Mann was for Walpole himself, but as all his accusations amount to mere assertions and conjectures, without the smallest evidence of the fact, it is only here mentioned as a proof that I have not examined only *one* side of the question.

‡ Walpole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, V. II. p. 128. Lansdowne's Poems.

A popular ballad, composed by Eastcourt the player, in honour of Walpole, during his imprisonment, proves the high esteem in which he was then held by his party, and predicted, with a true prophetic spirit, his future greatness.

On the Jewel in the Tower.

1.

If what the Tower of London holds
Is valu'd for more than its power;
Then counting what it now enfolds,
How wondrous rich is the same *Tower*.

2.

I think not of the armory,
Nor of the guns and lion's roar,
Nor yet the valu'd library;
I mean the Jewel in the *Tower*.

3.

This jewel late adorn'd the court
With excellence unknown before;
But now being blown upon in sport,
This Jewel's case is now the *Tower*.

4.

State lapidaries there have been,
To weigh and prove and look it o'er;
The very fashion's worth being seen,
Th' intrinsic, more than is the *Tower*.

5.

'Tis not St. George's diamond,
Nor any of his partner's store;
It never yet to such belong'd,
Which sent this Jewel to the *Tower*.

6.

With thousand methods they did try it,
Whose firmness strengthen'd ev'ry hour:
They were not able all to buy it,
And so they sent it to the *Tower*.

7.

They would have prov'd it counterfeit,
That it was right, 'twas truly swore;
But oaths, nor words, cou'd nothing get,
And so they sent it to the *Tower*.

8.

It's brilliant brightness who can doubt,
By Marlborough it was sometimes wore;
They turn'd the mighty master out,
Who turn'd this Jewel into the *Tower*.

9.

These are the marks upon it found,
King William's crest it bears before,
And Liberty's engraven round,
Though now confin'd within the *Tower*.

10.

Nor France in it an interest has,
Nor Spain with all its golden ore;
For to the queen and high allies,
Belongs this Jewel in the *Tower*.

11.

The owners modestly reserv'd
It in a decent Norfolk bower,
And scarce yet think it has deserv'd
The Cæsar's honour of the *Tower*.

12.

The day shall come to make amends,
This Jewel shall with pride be wore,
And o'er his foes, and with his friends,
Shine glorious bright out of the *Tower*.

Lady Walpole,* who had a pleasing voice, used to sing this ballad with great spirit and effect, and was particularly fond of dwelling on the last verse, at the time when the prophecy was fulfilled; when the prisoner

"O'er his foes, and with his friends,
"Shone glorious bright out of the Tower."

From Lord Orford.

CHAPTER 7.

1712—1714.

Released from his Imprisonment—Exertions in favour of his Party—Publishes various political Pieces—Eulogium of him, by Godolphin—Publishes the History of the late Parliament—Re-elected for Lynn—Speaks against the Peace; the Treaty of Commerce; and the Schism Bill—In favour of Sir Richard Steele, for printing the Crisis and the Englishman.

THE ministry having protracted the session by adjournment,* instead of ending it by prorogation, merely to detain him in prison, Walpole was not released until the 8th of July. From that period till the dissolution, which took place on the 8th of August, 1713, being incapacitated from serving his party in the house of commons, he exerted himself in maintaining the union of the Whigs, in conciliating the leaders, often discordant in their opinions, jealous of each other, or lukewarm in their conduct. He was a principal director of their counsels, and the great manager of their deliberations. The magnanimity and cheerfulness with which he acted, and suffered, his liberality in expending large sums in procuring intelligence, and promoting the Protestant succession, the hospitality with which

* Journals.—History of his Administration, p. 16.

he entertained his political associates, endeared him to the party, animated their counsels, and contributed to preserve them from defection. The heavy expenses incurred by these means, injured his private fortune, and involved him in pecuniary embarrassments; a circumstance which perhaps gave rise to, or at least sanctioned the report, afterwards industriously circulated by opposition, of his being a needy adventurer, who had not credit enough to raise an hundred pounds on his own security.* The gratitude he afterwards displayed to those persons who accommodated him with money at a considerable risk, does honour to his character.

During this period, he ably employed his pen in the service of his party. He assisted Steele in several political pamphlets;† and published an answer to the vote of the house of commons, that the states general had been deficient in their proportion of troops, and that the queen had paid subsidies to the amount of three millions of crowns above the sum stipulated.

His zeal and exertions were so conspicuous, that in September 1712, he received a flattering testimony of esteem, in a visit which he paid to Godolphin, while confined by his last illness at St. Alban's, in the house of the duchess of Marlborough. The dying statesman turning to the duchess, who stood by his bedside, said to her,

* Pulteney's reply to Sedition and Defamation Displayed, p. 8. —An Answer to one Part of an infamous Libel, &c. p. 34.

† Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2, p. 511.

"If you ever forsake that young man, and if souls are permitted to return from the grave to the earth, I will appear to you and reproach you for your conduct."*

The dissolution of the parliament at length taking place, Walpole's incapacity was removed, and he was again chosen for Lynn. While the elections were depending, it was the opinion of Somers, and the Whig lords, that to state to the people, in a strong and perspicuous manner, the proceedings of the late parliament, with a view to expose the measures of the ministry, and to guide the electors in the choice of the new representatives, would be highly advantageous to their party. As no one seemed better calculated for this office than Walpole, he undertook a pamphlet, at their desire, on the Thursday, and published it on the Tuesday following,† under the Title of, A Short History of the Parliament, with the motto:

Venalis Populus, venalis Curia Patrum.

To this publication is prefixed, a dedication by Pulteney, then his coadjutor, composed in a strain of irony and humour peculiarly his own, and in which, though addressed to an anonymous peer, it was easy to perceive that the earl of Oxford was the object of allusion.

The pamphlet tends to prove, that the pro-

* From the late earl of Orford.

† Article, Earl of Orford, in Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors, in which many of his other pamphlets are enumerated.

ceedings of the parliament had been directly contrary to the honour and advantage of England. The author defends the measures of the late administration with great ability; and after refuting the censures passed on Marlborough and Townshend, instances his own case, and describes himself as sharing the honour of an impeachment with those illustrious men. He introduced a just and spirited eulogium on his great patron the duke of Marlborough. His animadversions on the conduct of the parliament, were made with so much freedom and asperity, that it was not deemed prudent to entrust them to a common printer. Walpole himself, at a subsequent period, expresses the apprehensions of the danger he might have incurred, had the author been discovered. "There is a noble lord in the other house, who can, if he pleases, inform gentlemen, that the author of that history was so apprehensive of the consequences of printing it, that the press was carried to his house, and the copies printed there."*

In the new parliament, which met on the 16th of February, 1714, Walpole, deriving fresh lustre from his late eclipse, distinguished himself with more than usual ability. He warmly opposed the peace; the foundation of the South Sea company; the treaty of commerce with France; the schism bill: and in all these instances he proved his consummate knowledge and experience in affairs of the most complicated

* Chandler's Debates, April 13, 1738.—Probably the peer alluded to was lord Cobham.—See also Chapter 50 of this Work.

nature, and greatly embarrassed the speakers on the side of government.

He was also particularly active in defence of Steele, who had rendered himself obnoxious to the ministers by his bold writings on the side of the Whigs, and was accused by auditor Foley, Sir William Wyndham, and the Tories, of having published the Englishman and the Crisis. The rage of party was so violent on this occasion, that an attempt was made to compel Steele to withdraw, without entering into his own defence, but this unjust proposition was over-ruled without a division, though it occasioned a debate of some length, in which Walpole took an active part. The motion, that he should be permitted to make his defence to the imputed libel, paragraph by paragraph, was, however, determined against him. He then entered on his defence, with a temper, modesty, and eloquence quite unusual to him, and continued speaking three hours. After he had withdrawn, no member on the side of the ministry attempted to answer him; and auditor Foley only observed, that without amusing the house with long speeches, it was plain to every body, that the writings complained of, were seditious and scandalous, injurious to her majesty's government, the church, and the universities; and moved for the question. This motion occasioned a warm debate, in which Walpole bore the most active and principal share. Among other bold animadversions, he observed, That this violent prosecution struck at the liberties of the subject in

general, and of the members of that house in particular; justified Mr. Steele on all the heads of the accusation raised against him; and said, he hoped the house would not sacrifice one of their members to the resentment and rage of the ministry, for no other crime than exposing their mismanagements, and, like a good patriot, warning his countrymen against the imminent dangers with which the nation, in general, and in particular her majesty's sacred person, were threatened, by the visible encouragement that was given to the Pretender's friends. In this defence, Walpole asked the house, "Why the author was answerable in parliament for the things which he wrote in his private capacity? And if he is punishable by law, why is he not left to the law? By this mode of proceeding, parliament, which used to be the scourge only of evil ministers, is made by ministers the scourge of the subject. The ministers," he added, "are sufficiently armed with authority; they possess the great sanction of rewards and punishments, the disposal of the privy purse, the grace of pardoning, and the power of condemning to the pillory for seditious writings; powers consistent with, and naturally arising from their exalted situation, and which they cannot too jealously guard from being perverted to answer indirect or criminal purposes. In former reigns, the audacity of corruption extended itself only to judges and juries; the attempt so to degrade parliament was, till the present period, unheard of. The liberty of the press is unrestrained;

how then shall a part of the legislature dare to punish that as a crime which is not declared to be so by any law, framed by the whole? And why should that house be made the instrument of such a detestable purpose; that house, which had to boast the honourable distinction of being applied to, as the source of redress, in all cases of oppression? Steele," he observed, " has advanced nothing which bears a direct criminal construction; nothing which can be construed into guilt without the assistance of forced inuendoes; and shall parliament assume the ungracious part of thus inferring guilt from mere arbitrary construction? If they do, what advantage to government or the community can be expected to result from such a measure? Are doctrines refuted, and truths suppressed, by being censured or stigmatized?—In the reign of James, it was criminal to say, that the king was a Papist; but the severity of the law, or the cruelty of its ministers, could not eradicate from the mind of a single individual, the confirmed belief of the fact. Steele is only attacked, because he is the advocate for the Protestant succession; the cause which he so ably defends, gives the offence; through his sides the succession is to be wounded; his punishment will be a symptom, that the succession is in danger; and the ministry are now feeling the pulse of parliament, to see how far they may be able to proceed. Does Mr. Steele," he inquired, " incur any blame for writing against Popery? In the reign of James, indeed, preaching against Popery

was considered as casting a reflection on the ministry. But it was not so in the reign of king William. From what fatality does it arise, that what is written in favour of the Protestant succession, and was countenanced by the late ministry, is deemed a libel on the present administration? General invectives in the pulpit against drinking, fornication, or any particular vice, have never been esteemed a reflection on particular persons, unless these persons are guilty of the darling sin against which the preacher inveighs. It becomes, then, a fair inference from their irritability and resentment against its defender, that the darling sin of the present administration is to obstruct the Protestant succession. If a Papist, nay an Irish Papist, who for many years has been a servant to the late king James, and the Pretender (meaning Sir Patrick Lawless), one who has borne arms against her majesty in France and Spain; one who is strongly suspected of having embrued his hands in the blood of the late duke of Medina Celi, and marquis of Leganez; if such a man be not only permitted to come into England, but to appear at court, in the presence-chamber; if he be caressed by the ministers; nay, I speak it with horror, if such a man be admitted into her majesty's private audience, in her closet, will not every good subject think her person in danger? And is it then a crime in Mr. Steele to show his concern for so precious a life?"*

* The principal part of this speech is taken from memorandums, in the hand writing of Sir Robert Walpole: Orford Papers.—Chandler.

The ministers, however, carried their point; the Crisis and Englishman were voted seditious libels, and Steele was expelled the house.*

The speech of Walpole on this occasion procured him great applause; but the public did not know, that the defence made by Steele himself, was in a great degree the offspring of his eloquence; a fact related by bishop Newton, on the authority of Pulteney.† "When "Steele was to be expelled the house of com- "mons, Mr. Walpole and Mr. Pulteney, and "Mr. Addison, were commissioned to go to "him, by the noblemen and members of the "Kit Kat Club, with their positive order and "determination, that Steele should not make "his own speech, but Addison should make "it for him, and he should recite it from "the other's writing, without any insertion or "addition of his own. Addison thought this "an hard injunction, and said, that he must "be like a school-boy, and desire the gentle- "men to give him a little sense. Walpole "said, that it was impossible to speak a speech "in cold blood; but being pressed, he said "he would try, and immediately spoke a very "good speech of what he thought proper "for Steele to say on the occasion; and the "next day in the house made another speech

* Steele afterwards published, "An Apology for himself and his Writings occasioned by his Expulsion from the House of Commons," which, with a becoming gratitude, he dedicated to Walpole.

† Life of Bishop Newton, by himself.

" as good, or better, on the same subject;
" but so totally different from the former,
" that there was scarce a single argument or
" thought the same; which particulars are
" mentioned as illustrious proofs of his uncom-
" mon eloquence."

CHAPTER 8.

1714.

Zeal of Walpole for the Hanover Succession—Justification of his Conduct on the Presumption that the Protestant Succession was in Danger—Public Alarms and Apprehensions—Death of Queen Anne.

THE great question, in which Walpole appears to have always exerted himself with unabated zeal, was on the state of the nation with regard to the danger of the Protestant succession. In the course of this debate, Bromley, secretary of state, having attempted to prove the negative, by representing the endeavours of the queen to secure that object, and to remove the Pretender from Loraine; Walpole with great spirit and warmth, avowed his opinion, that although the queen herself afforded no cause of apprehension, yet much was to be dreaded from the dubious conduct of some persons, and therefore insisted that her name should not be introduced.

The zeal of Walpole on this subject, was by no means adopted from a spirit of opposition, and was not a sudden spark struck out by the circumstances of the moment: it was a leading principle which had regulated his political conduct from his first entrance into life; it had been instilled into him by education, and matured by reason and reflection, to which he

uniformly adhered in all situations and under all circumstances.

If his object in spreading these alarms was, to distress government, and to excite tumults against the ministers, he acted a false and wicked part; but if he really had reason for his suspicions, he must be justified by every principle of attachment to the religion and constitution of the country. He can only be fully vindicated from the conviction, that it was the secret wish and resolution of the queen to exclude the Hanover family, and to restore the Pretender, and that some of the ministers were disposed to co-operate with her inclinations. At the period of which we are now speaking, the strongest suspicions were entertained, that such a scheme was in agitation, and those suspicions have been since verified by the most authentic documents.

It was natural to suppose, that as the queen had no surviving issue, her affection for her brother, of whose legitimacy she appears now to have entertained no doubt, would supersede her inclination to a foreign family. She had often declared that she did not consider the crown as her right, and the impressions of conscience naturally led her to atone for the wrongfulness of her possession, by permitting it to resume its ancient course of descent. In these ideas, she was encouraged by her favourite, Mrs. Masham; and when, by the intrigues of that artful woman, the ascendancy of the Whig party was destroyed, she entertained these projects with less reserve, and employed herself assiduously to give them effect. Harley, who had succeeded

in dividing the Whigs, so as to prevent them from exerting their united force in a consistent opposition, yet found he could not carry on the government, and make a peace, without the assistance of the Jacobites: a direct communication was opened with the court of St. Germain's. The Pretender addressed a pathetic letter* to the queen, urging his own right to the crown, in which every soothing effort of supplication and submission was employed, and every appeal made to family pride, to tenderness, and justice, which could be supposed to influence a mind naturally benevolent and just, and which was beginning, through lassitude and perplexity, to seek some repose from the multiplied cares of a stormy government. Under these sinister auspices, the peace of Utrecht was made; a peace which confounded the characters of victors and vanquished, and in which the grand objects of the war were completely relinquished. The interests of the Pretender were kept in view, rather than those of the country, and the queen was anxious that the French king should not be deprived of the power to afford him effectual assistance.

The establishment of the Protestant religion was the only motive which could counteract the bias of the queen's mind in favour of her brother. The influence of that consideration was much diminished by her dislike to the family destined to succeed her; a prejudice

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2.

which induced her to resist all approach of them to her person, and to oppose the applications of the electress Sophia, for a writ to call up the electoral prince to the house of peers; a prejudice so well known to those who possessed her confidence, that Mrs. Masham made no scruple to declare to the French minister whom Louis the Fourteenth sent to treat for peace, that the Hanover family *was all their aversion*,* and that it was the wish of the queen, that matters should be so arranged that justice might at some time take place. Those who favoured the cause of the Pretender, were so anxious to avail themselves of these favourable appearances, that they advised him, either in show, or in fact, to renounce his religion, to withdraw himself from the protection of the French king, to marry a Protestant, and reside in Sweden. Matters were carried so far, that some of his sanguine partisans advised him to go to Scotland, and others even projected a plan for his being presented by the queen to the parliament, and publicly acknowledged as her successor.† Meetings were also held, both in town and country, to promote the repeal of the act of settlement, and to vest in the queen the power of nominating a successor. These schemes were directly over-ruled, or indirectly counteracted by Harley, who, notwithstanding his junction with the Jacobites, for the sole purpose of making a peace, and maintaining his ground

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2.

† See Memoires de Berwick, and Menager's Negotiations.

against the Whigs, does not appear ever to have wished to frustrate the provisions of the act of settlement. His conduct at length made such an impression on that party, that through their intrigues he was dismissed from administration, on a suspicion of lukewarmness or duplicity, and Bolingbroke, who was supposed to be more implicitly devoted to their interests, was recommended as his successor by the duke of Berwick, natural son of James the Second, and the Pretender's agent with the disaffected in England.

These intrigues were too public and notorious to escape the knowledge of the friends to the Protestant succession; Sir Robert Walpole,* in the latter period of his life, frequently declared that the leaders of the Whigs were fully apprized of them, and that he, in particular, drew his information from two persons who were present at a meeting in the country between the chiefs of the ministry and the leading men of both houses. Their deliberations turned on the manner of invalidating or repealing the act of succession. An actual repeal, and a positive declaration of the Pretender's right, was moved by some: it was recommended by others, to leave to the queen a full power to nominate her successor by will.

Those who treat the danger of the Protestant succession as chimerical, observe in reply to these inferences, that from the time of the Revolution, many of the ministers had corres-

* Etough's Minutes of a Conference with Horace Walpole, at Putney, August 6 and 20, 1752.

ponded with the Pretender and his family; some of them with the connivance of the sovereign on the throne, and probably with a view of discovering the schemes of the Jacobites. On similar principles it may be conjectured, that Bolingbroke * and Ormond might also have caballed with Berwick and the agents of the Pretender, with a view only of obtaining the dismission of Oxford, and the support of the Jacobites; and might, as soon as they had secured themselves in their places, have followed the example of Oxford. In corroboration of this argument, it appears from a letter of Erasmus Lewis to Swift, † that Bolingbroke, at this period, courted the principal leaders of the Whigs: Walpole ‡ himself also admitted that Bolingbroke had held a meeting with them for the purpose of arranging the terms of a coalition, at which he gave the most positive assurances of his good wishes to the Protestant succession; but when it was insisted, that as a proof of his sincerity, the Pretender should be removed to such a distance as would prevent his interference in the affairs of England, he declared his inability to obtain the consent of the queen, to what she deemed the banishment of her brother. To attempt to fathom the politics, and unquestionably trace the designs of the artful

* See Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2. p. 529—534.

† Swift's Letters, vol. 1. Letter 150.

‡ Etough's Letter to Lord Walpole: he received this anecdote from Hotham, Master of the Charter House, who was intimately connected with Sir Robert Walpole.

and unprincipled Bolingbroke, would be difficult even at this time, when party prejudices have subsided, and when many lights have been thrown on his conduct. But at the period here alluded to, the task was impracticable. How could the Whigs discriminate whether his intrigues with Marlborough, and his negotiations with some of their leaders, were intended merely to counteract the designs of Oxford, or to deceive them; or whether his correspondence with the Pretender, was carried on with the view of promoting or frustrating his restoration.

But such conjectures do not strictly apply to the question in agitation, Whether intrigues were not employed to set aside the Hanover line, and to induce the queen to assist in placing the Pretender on the throne? That simple fact is incontrovertible, and affords a justification of the Whigs, and of those Tories who were friends to the Hanover line, that having knowledge of such cabals, or even entertaining strong presumptions of them, they should use every means to defeat those attempts. They were bound in duty to propose such strong measures as would awaken the Protestants to a sense of their danger, and force the queen and ministry to consent to such acts as were most likely to secure the succession; and they were to come forward repeatedly and continually, that the passions of men might not be suffered to sleep, and that the danger might be made manifest to the discernment of the public. They are therefore sufficiently vindicated for setting a price on the Pretender's head; for consulting with

the agents of Hanover; for advising Baron Schutz to demand the writ for the electoral prince to be called to the house of peers, and for insisting that he should be permitted to reside in London, although Oxford told the duke of Kent, that to bring over one of the electoral family, would be to expose the queen's coffin to her view.

The last six months of the reign of Anne, was a fearful period; big with alarms, during which the kingdom stood on the "*perilous edge*"* of domestic commotions and foreign invasion. The nation was divided into three parties, each differently interested in regard to the Hanover line. The Jacobites, hostile and exulting; the Tories, disaffected, neutral, or lukewarm; the Whigs, always active, yet occasionally desponding, anxious to avoid a civil war, yet determined to hazard their lives and fortunes in support of their religion and constitution; and it is impossible to read the Stuart and Hanover Papers, in Macpherson's Collection for 1714, and the Memoirs of Berwick, and of the duke of Hamilton, without shuddering at the dangers which seemed likely to burst forth from the violence of those parties, and the collision of discordant opinions.

The earl of Chesterfield † was firmly convinced, that if the queen had lived three months longer, the religion and liberties of this country would have been in imminent danger. The patience of the Whigs was nearly exhausted;

* Milton.

† Life of Lord Chesterfield, p. 13.—Letter to Mr. Jumeau.

their apprehensions increased, and they were induced to form associations for the protection of their religion and liberties; the people caught the alarm; many of the Tories began to see the danger, and to act in conjunction with the Whigs for the general security.

At this important crisis, the queen was seized with a sudden stroke of apoplexy, which took away her senses, and soon occasioned her death. Although she had dismissed Oxford, she had not yet nominated his successor; and while Bolingbroke and his party were wavering, the dukes of Argyle and Somerset entered the council chamber without being summoned, and moved for an examination of the physicians. The queen being pronounced in great danger, they represented that it was necessary to fill up the place of lord treasurer, and the duke of Shrewsbury was proposed. The whole board assenting, the queen, during a lucid interval, delivered to him the white staff. The privy counsellors being summoned, Somers and other friends to the Protestant succession, made their appearance;* and every precaution was taken to quiet the public mind, and to ensure the accession of the elector of Hanover. Anne expired on the first of August 1714; and Bolingbroke expresses himself in a letter to Swift,† dated August 3; "The earl of Oxford was removed on Tuesday; the queen died on Sunday. What a world is this, and how does fortune banter us."

* Tindal.

† Swift's Letters, vol. 1, p. 507.

PERIOD THE SECOND:

From the Accession of GEORGE I. *to the Commencement of the South Sea Scheme:*

1714—1720.

CHAPTER 9.

1714.

General State of the European Powers at the Death of Queen Anne, with respect to their Inclination or Capacity to promote or obstruct the Accession of George the First—State of Great Britain—Character of George the First—not calculated to promote his Cause.

NO Prince ever ascended a throne under more critical circumstances, and with less appearance of a quiet reign, than George the First; whether we consider the state of the European powers, the situation of parties in Great Britain, or his own character.

Most of the European powers were at this critical juncture from motives of prejudice, alliance or personal dislike, averse to the interests of the elector of Hanover; and those who had not taken a decided part against him, with the exception of Prussia and Holland alone, were indifferent or incapable of showing their friendship.

Although Louis the Fourteenth had guaran-

teed, at the peace of Utrecht, the right of the house of Hanover to the crown of Great Britain, and on the demise of Anne had acknowledged George the First, yet it was well known that his attachment to the Roman Catholic religion, his jealousy of England, and a spirit of magnanimity which he greatly affected, would lead him to assist, if possible, the unfortunate prince, whom he had once publicly received as the lawful successor of James the Second. Though too much exhausted by the late war, to follow his inclinations by an active interference, he connived at the preparations making by the Pretender within his dominions; and should any domestic insurrections take place, so as to give hopes of success, he was ready to pour in the whole force of France to promote a restoration.

Spain, at this period, was little more than a province of France, and her sovereign Philip the Fifth acted in perfect subordination to the will of his grandfather Louis the Fourteenth, to whose assistance he was principally indebted for the crown. He nourished a violent antipathy to the elector of Hanover, and though prudence and necessity induced him to acknowledge him king of Great Britain, yet his principles and wishes inclined him to favour the Stuarts.

John the Fifth reigned in Portugal, a prince who possessed greater talents and activity than any of the former sovereigns of the line of Braganza. But he was already involved in a war with Spain, and though he had some confi-

dence in the promises of assistance from George, yet he depended more on the mediation of France, and was, of course, liable to be biassed by the cabinet of Versailles.

The emperor Charles the Sixth, the head of the house of Austria, disappointed, as well as incensed at the manner in which the peace of Utrecht had been concluded, maintained a gloomy reserve with respect to the affairs of England, and might fairly be supposed rather inimical than otherwise to the interests of George, whose growing influence in Germany, he watched with a jealous circumspection. He well knew that the party in England, which favoured the accession of the house of Brunswick, was extremely weak, and believed that the Elector himself was indifferent to his elevation; on these accounts he was unwilling to offend his competitor by too great an opposition to his interest.* In consequence of these motives, he refused,† at the peace at Rastadt, to guaranty the succession of the family of George the First to the crown of Great Britain.

The most powerful among the German princes was Frederic William king of Prussia, who was included in the entail of the act of settlement, and who had espoused Sophia Dorothea, the daughter of George the First. Upon the first news of Anne's illness, he repaired

* Macpherson's State Papers, vol. 2, p. 638.

† Lord Townshend to Count Starenberg; Goerde, October 24, 1725.

to Hanover, and assured his father-in-law, the elector, that he would assist him with all his forces to maintain his title to the British throne. But the Prussian monarch had not yet established, on a firm basis, his great system of military tactics, and his whole force could only tend to preserve the electorate of Hanover, without affording any effectual assistance to the king of Great Britain for resisting external enemies, or curbing internal opposition.

The United Provinces, enfeebled by exertions above their strength, bending under a vast load of debt, considering themselves shamefully deserted by England, and unwilling to contract new engagements which might again expose them to fresh dangers and new debts, yet alone acted with sincerity and spirit. Conscious that the restoration of the Pretender would be followed by a strict union between France and England, which might prove destructive to their interests, they promoted, to the utmost of their power, the accession of George the First, and received him, as he passed through their country to take possession of his throne, with every demonstration of respect and affection.

Russia was just emerging from Asiatic indolence and barbarity, and rising into importance under the amazing efforts of Peter the Great, who already entertained those jealousies against George the First, which afterwards nearly broke out into open hostilities. But at present he was engaged in a war with Sweden and Turkey;

and was not in a situation either to obstruct or assist the accession.

Sweden, involved in a destructive war with Russia, Denmark, and Poland, in which she had lost her fairest provinces, and seen her veteran soldiers either exterminated or taken prisoners, was no longer in that proud situation which enabled her to give law to the north. Irritated against George the First for the claims which he had begun to make on Bremen and Verden, Charles the Twelfth would have opposed his accession, if his circumstances and situation had permitted. But he was at this critical moment resident in Turkey, uselessly displaying those instances of romantic bravery and inflexible obstinacy, which characterized rather the leader of a savage horde of Tartars, than a sovereign of a great and civilized people.

Denmark, under the wise administration of Frederic the Fourth, was just beginning to recover from the deep wounds inflicted by a long war with Sweden, which still continued; her commerce languishing, and the resources of the state almost exhausted. The king might consider the accession of his ally, who had long aspired to share the spoils of Sweden, a fortunate occurrence. But Denmark was more likely to require assistance from George, than George to receive any effectual succour from Denmark. Frederic was at the best but a passive friend, and only in a situation to defend his own territories and conquests.

Poland, under the feeble domination of an elective monarch, was declining fast in the political scale of Europe. Augustus the Second was almost a cypher, totally governed by Peter the Great, to whom he owed his re-establishment, and in no respect sufficiently considerable to affect the succession in England.

The small sovereignties, and petty republics of Italy, were of little consideration.

The Pope, no longer a great temporal prince, took no active share in the general affairs of Europe. Clement the Eleventh, however inclined to favour the Pretender, possessed neither influence nor strength sufficient to obstruct the succession of the Protestant line; he could only offer an asylum to a prince, whose father had sacrificed his crown to his religion; and who, after being driven from place to place as an outcast from society, thought himself fortunate in being permitted to hide his proscribed head within the capital of the ecclesiastical dominions.

Savoy and Piedmont, from their critical situation between France and the Milanese, and from the transcendant talents and military skill of several sovereigns, particularly Emanuel Philibert, and Charles Emanuel the First, had risen from a petty principality into consequence. Victor Amadeus, the reigning prince, no less ambitious and enterprising than his great predecessors, had followed their policy, in selling himself to those who bid highest for his assistance and alliance, and in making, gradually,

small acquisitions, which increased his strength, without giving umbrage to his neighbours; acting in conformity to a proverb, which he is said to have applied to the Milanese: "I must "acquire the Milanese province by province, as "I eat the leaves of an artichoke,"

Of all the European sovereigns who had acceded to the grand alliance, Victor Amadeus alone had reason to be contented with the measures of the British cabinet. Anne had zealously exerted herself in his favour, and obtained for him at the peace of Utrecht, the kingdom of Sicily; that part of the duchies of Mountferrat and Milan, by the cession of which Leopold had detached him from France, and the guaranty of the succession to the crown of Spain, on the failure of the male line of Philip the Fifth. Yet these important advantages had not satisfied the aspiring views of Victor Amadeus. His consort, Anna Maria, grand-daughter of Charles the First of England, and the next in succession after the children of James the Second, had protested against the act of settlement, as contrary to her right by hereditary descent; and he considered the elector of Hanover as usurping a crown which belonged to his son. He, therefore, looked with an evil eye on the peaceful accession of George the First, and with that versatility of politics that marked his character, was already meditating a return to his old alliance with France, which he afterwards effected.

Such was the general situation of Europe at

the death of queen Anne; George had more enemies than friends, and his sole dependence was placed on the spirit and vigour of his partisans in England; but the state of this country was not such as to augur success.

The reigns of his two immediate predecessors had been stormy, distracted with factions, and opened a gloomy prospect of a new reign, under a foreign sovereign. The contending political parties, exasperated by long opposition, and all the injuries attending alternate elevation and depression, expressed their rancour in mutual accusation and virulent reproach.

The Tories, who, though extremely powerful, both in respect of numbers and property, were censurable for their arrogance, in pronouncing themselves, exclusively, the landholders and proprietors of the kingdom, reviled their opponents as a faction which leaned for support on the enemies of the church and monarchy, and on the bank, and monied interest, which was, as they said, raised by usury and founded on corruption.

The Whigs retaliated by charging the Tories, who formed the bulk of the nation, and included most of the country gentlemen and parochial clergy, with an attachment to the French, and hatred of the Dutch; with all the crimes with which they loaded the framers of the peace of Utrecht; and with favouring the interests of Louis the Fourteenth, because he supported their idol the Pretender. It is a great injustice, however, to confound, as they did, the charac-

ters of the Tories and Jacobites; for although many of the Tories had, from motives of pique or disappointed ambition, as well as from affection, corresponded with the court of St. Germain's, yet it did not follow that they all uniformly entertained the scheme of restoring the dethroned family. The inculpation however was not divested of all show of truth; the general principles of the Tories tended strongly to enforce passive obedience and non-resistance, and as they disapproved the doctrines which occasioned the revolution, censured by implication the Protestant succession. The Jacobites too, disappointed in their towering hopes, favoured this popular misapprehension, by endeavouring to connect the cause and opinions of the Tories with their own. The strong feature of distinction between the Whigs and Tories was, that the Tories were willing to have assented to the resumption of the crown by the Pretender, if he would have embraced the Protestant persuasion; while the Whigs, armed with just diffidence and distrust, and considering the political principles in which he had been educated, no less hostile to their liberties, than his faith was to their religious persuasion, would admit of no compromise, nor on any terms agree to his restoration.

The Tories were reinforced by the Jacobites, who possessed great credit abroad, and influence at home; who had acquired an unlimited ascendancy in the Clans of Scotland, full of resentment at the act of union, and amongst the

Papists of Ireland, who formed the bulk of that kingdom, and were attached to their cause by every tie of religious consideration. The Whigs, to balance the influence of the Jacobites and Catholics, had the assistance of the whole body of Dissenters, who, irritated at the severity of the schism bill, passed under the influence of the Tories, hoped, from a Protestant monarch, and a Whig administration, a repeal of that law.

The Whigs now raised themselves from the despondency into which they had been thrown by the measures of the four last years of the queen, and hailed the new reign as the commencement of their triumph. The Tories, divided and irresolute, concealed their chagrin in a show of submission, while they meditated new manœuvres for the attainment of power; and the Jacobites, precipitated from the exultation of hope too fondly indulged, submitted for the present, but resolved to embrace the first opportunity of breaking into open rebellion.

George the First, who, by the death of his mother, the electress Sophia,* succeeded to the throne of Great Britain, in virtue of the act of Settlement, was ill calculated by nature, disposition, and habit, to reconcile these jarring parties, and remove the unfavourable impressions, which it was natural for all people to entertain of a foreigner, destined to rule over them. He was below the middle stature, and his person,

* Sophia grand daughter of James the First, and widow of Ernest Augustus, elector of Hanover, died the 8th of June, 1714, only two months before queen Anne, in the 84th year of her age.

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though well proportioned, did not impress dignity or respect. He had attained his fifty-fifth year, and had been long habituated to a court of a different description from that of England, to manners and customs wholly repugnant to those of his new subjects. His countenance was benign, but without much expression; and his address awkward. He was easy and familiar only in his hours of relaxation, and to those alone who formed his usual society; not fond of attracting notice, phlegmatic and grave in his public deportment, hating the splendour of majesty, shunning crouds, and fatigued even with the first acclamations of the multitude. This natural reserve was heightened by his ignorance of the language, of the first principles of the English constitution, and of the spirit and temper of the people. Without taste for the fine arts, except music, or the smallest inclination for polite literature, men of talents had no reason to expect from his influence that patronage which they had enjoyed in the preceding reign.

It was currently reported that measures were preparing to evade the laws which excluded foreigners from honours and employments. The example of William was not forgotten, who by his largesses to Bentinck, Zulestein, and Keppel, had given so much umbrage; and George had several mistresses, of whom two the most favoured were expected to accompany him to England, with a numerous train of Hanoverian followers, eager to share the spoils

of the *promised land;* to set up a court within a court, and an interest opposite to the true interest of England. It was also maliciously circulated, that he was indifferent to his own succession, and scarcely willing to stretch out a hand to grasp the crown within his reach;* a report which materially lessened his influence in foreign courts, and tended to produce reciprocal indifference in the English. But he had excellent qualities for a sovereign, plainness of manners, simplicity of character, and benignity of temper; great application to business, extreme exactness in distributing his time, the strictest economy in regulating his revenue, and notwithstanding his military skill and tried valour, a love of peace; virtues, however, which required time before they were appreciated, and not of that specious cast to captivate the multitude, or to raise the tide of popularity.

From this representation, it appears that few circumstances concurred to favour his quiet accession; yet no son ever succeeded his father on the throne, after an interrupted succession of a long line of ancestors, with greater tranquillity than GEORGE the First. This success was principally owing to the abilities, prudence, activity, and foresight of the great Whigs, and to the precautions which they had always taken, and now took, to promote the succession in the Protestant line, with whom the Hanoverian agents in London concerted their mode of conduct, and to whom the elector resigned himself and his cause.

* Macpherson, vol. 2, p. 638.

CHAPTER 10.

1714.

Proceedings in Parliament on the Death of Queen Anne—Accession of George the First—Transactions at Hanover—Artful Policy of the King, in his Conduct to the Two Parties—His Arrival in England—Formation of a Whig Ministry—Walpole Paymaster of the Forces—Inveteracy of Parties.

ON the death of the queen, the great officers of the realm, in whom the regency bill had vested the executive power, together with certain peers, appointed by the elector of Hanover, in three instruments written by himself, took upon themselves, as lords justices, the administration of affairs till the arrival of the new sovereign, and summoned the privy council.

George was proclaimed king, with the usual solemnities in the cities of London and Westminster; no disorder was committed, or opposition made, and the earl of Dorset was dispatched to carry to Hanover the news of his inauguration, and to attend him to England. The proclamation took place with equal tranquillity at Edinburgh and Dublin.

On the day of the queen's death, the parliament met pursuant to the act which regulated the succession. Sir Thomas Hanmer, the speaker, being absent, Bromley, secretary of state,

moved that the house should adjourn to Wednesday; but Sir Richard Onslow opposing this motion, from the consideration that time was too precious to be lost at so critical a juncture, proposed that the house should adjourn only to the following morning, which was carried. The three succeeding days being occupied in taking the oaths, on the 5th the lords justices came to the house of peers, and the chancellor, in their name, made a speech, declaring that they had, in virtue of the act of settlement, and in conjunction with the privy council, proclaimed the elector of Hanover king; and as several branches of the public revenue had expired by the demise of the queen, recommended the house of commons to make such provisions as were requisite to support the dignity and honour of the crown.*

Both houses unanimously agreed to addresses of condolence for the death of queen Anne, and of congratulation on the accession of the king; and when, in the house of commons, the secretary of state, in moving the address, expatiated on the great loss which the nation had sustained, Walpole seconded the motion, but proposed "to add something more substantial than words, by giving assurances of making good all parliamentary funds." Onslow, member for Surry, also observed, that the force of the address ought to consist, not in condolence only, but congratulations, and in assuring the king of their firm resolution to support his undoubted title to the crown, and to maintain the public

* Journals.

credit. The Whigs acted with extraordinary prudence at this crisis: for when the renewal of the civil list was brought into the lower house, the Tories, under pretence of extraordinary zeal for the new government, proposed one million, which exceeded by £.300,000 the revenue of the late queen. But the king's friends, apprehensive that the Tories acted insidiously, either with a view to conciliate favour, or for the purpose of reproaching him afterwards, as oppressing the nation by a higher revenue than his predecessor had enjoyed, did not second the motion, and it was dropped. A bill passed, fixing the same sum which had been granted in the last reign, with two additional clauses, moved by Horace Walpole, for the payment of arrears due to the troops of Hanover, and for a reward of £.100,000, from the treasury, to any person apprehending the Pretender, if he should attempt to land in any part of the British dominions.

The king having returned an answer to the addresses, the lords justices came again to the house of peers on the 23d of August, and the chancellor intimated his majesty's great satisfaction at the loyalty and affection which his subjects had displayed: other loyal addresses were made in reply; the royal assent was given by the lords justices to the money bills, and parliament prorogued to the 23d of September. Thus ended a session, which was conducted with a degree of tranquillity and unanimity long unknown to their proceedings,

and seemed to give a happy omen of a quiet and prosperous reign.*

During these transactions, the eyes of Europe and the expectations of England were naturally directed to Hanover. On the 26th of July, the earl of Clarendon, a zealous Tory, who was appointed envoy extraordinary from the queen, had arrived in that capital; but it was not till the 4th of August that he received his first audience at the palace of Herenhausen. At this interview the elector affected to repose the highest confidence in the promises of the queen, expressed a sense of the obligations which his family owed to her, and professed himself unacquainted with the demand made by the electress, of the writ for calling his son to the house of peers.† Craggs, who had been sent with an account of the queen's dangerous illness, arrived there on the 27th, and instantly went to Herenhausen with the letter from the privy council: on the same night three other expresses came over, two to the king, and one to Clarendon, with the news of the queen's death.‡ On the receipt of this intelligence, the king summoned his council; and baron Polnitz, who was at Hanover, adds, "many people were pleased to say, that the elector hesitated whether he should accept of the august dignity; but for

* Journals.—Political State of Great Britain.—Chandler.—Tindal.

† Correspondence, Period 2d. Clarendon's Letter to Bromley—August 7th.

‡ Tindal, v. 18, p. 388.

my part, I fancy that the voyage to England was more the subject of the council's deliberation, than the question whether the crown should be accepted."*

At the conclusion of the council, George was complimented on his accession; and gave orders to make preparations for his departure, which he judiciously delayed, that he might obtain from England such information as would assist him in the difficult task of forming a new administration, which he managed with great prudence and dexterity.

George had already conducted himself with so much address, that Clarendon does not appear to have entertained the smallest suspicion of any disinclination to the Tories; and Bernsdorf and Goertz, his two principal ministers at Hanover, corresponded with each party. Bernsdorf countenanced the Whigs, Goertz the Tories, so that each party entertained hopes of being called into office. The expectations of the Tories were still farther raised by the conduct of Halifax, who, disappointed of the office of lord high treasurer, by the influence of Townshend, proposed the formation of a motley ministry, recommending, among other Tories, Bromley to be chancellor of the exchequer, and Sir Thomas Hanmer one of the tellers. The hope that the king would accede to this, or some other arrangement, and their "dependance on real credit and substantial power under the new

* Memoirs of Polnitz: Article Hanover.

government,"* kept the Tories in suspense, and prevented their opposing his establishment. Yet, though the king did not seem averse to their cause, he appears at that very time to have formed, with the advice of Bothmar, his agent in London, an administration entirely of Whigs, but of this he gave no public indication till after his arrival at the Hague, which occasioned a report, that he was not before decided from which party he should select a cabinet. At the Hague, the ascendancy of the Whigs was manifest, by the public appointment of Townshend to be secretary of state, with the power of nominating his colleague. In fact, Horace Walpole,† the brother-in-law and confidential secretary of lord Townshend, by whose recommendation Stanhope was afterwards associated with Townshend as secretary, positively denies that it was ever the king's intention to form a Tory administration.

The most agreeable accounts being transmitted by Bothmar, that things wore a favourable appearance, the king continued a fortnight at the Hague, receiving the affectionate congratulations of the States, and the compliments of the foreign ministers, and settling with the Whigs the mode of his future conduct, and the members of the new administration to be appointed on his arrival into England.

At six in the afternoon, on the 18th of Sep-

* Bolingbroke's Letter to Sir William Wyndham.

† Letter to Etough, September 21, 1752. Correspondence, Period II.

tember, amidst a large concourse of nobility and gentry, GEORGE THE FIRST landed at Greenwich. He particularly distinguished the Whig lords, did not pay the smallest attention to Ormond and Harcourt, and only slightingly noticed Oxford, who was on the following morning admitted to kiss his hand.

The appointment of the new administration had been already announced by previous arrangements. The lords of the regency declared Addison their secretary, and ordered all dispatches to be forwarded to him; to the great mortification of Bolingbroke, who was obliged to stand at the door of the council with his papers, without obtaining admittance. On the 28th of August, an express had arrived from Hanover, bearing orders from the king for removing Bolingbroke from his office of secretary of state; the dismission was attended with evident marks of displeasure from the lords of the regency; Shrewsbury, Somerset, and Cowper taking the seals, and locking the doors of his office; and on the 17th of September, before the king's arrival, Townshend was sworn principal secretary of state in his place. Stanhope was appointed the other secretary; Cowper, lord chancellor; Marlborough, commander in chief, and master of the ordnance; Wharton, privy seal; Sunderland, lord lieutenant of Ireland; Halifax, first lord commissioner of the treasury; Devonshire, lord steward of the house-hold; Orford, first lord commissioner of the admiralty; Somerset, master of the horse; Walpole, pay-

master of the forces, and many of his friends provided for in subordinate offices. The principal employments were filled with Whigs; Shrewsbury, who had been the ostensible means of defeating the schemes of Bolingbroke, having resigned the high trusts of lord treasurer, and lord lieutenant of Ireland, was constituted groom of the stole; and the only Tory who was admitted into a high department, and treated with any degree of confidence, was Nottingham, who was declared president of the council. A new privy council was appointed, and a cabinet formed, consisting principally of Marlborough, Nottingham, Sunderland, Halifax, Townshend, Cowper, Stanhope, and Somers, who, on account of his increasing infirmities, was incapable of filling any active department.

The king, or rather Townshend and Walpole, to whom the formation of the new ministry was principally attributed, have been severely censured for excluding the Tories, and confining all places of trust and confidence exclusively to the Whigs, thus making the monarch the leader of a party, instead of sovereign of his people at large.

It may not be improper to remark, that in treating of past events, writers are too apt to form a judgment of things according to principles of theoretical justice or fancied perfection, without considering the temper of the times, or making sufficient allowance for the powerful operation of opinions and prejudices. When we consult contemporary accounts, we find that so great was the inveteracy which subsisted between

the Whigs and Tories, that neither would have been content with less than the whole power; and such was the temper of the nation at the time of the king's accession, and the animosity derived from the clash of civil and religious opinions, that it would have been impracticable to form a stable coalition between the two parties. In fact, the scheme of uniting the Whigs and Tories was incompatible; for even so late as 1742, when Pulteney attempted to form his new administration on an extended and liberal principle, he would not venture to introduce many Tories; he declared that the basis of the ministry must be a Whig trunk engrafted with Tory branches; and that gradually the grafts would become more and more numerous and thriving. Nor was it till 1744, when the junction ludicrously called the Broad Bottom was arranged, that the great bodies of Whigs and Tories could be brought to coalesce.

CHAPTER II.

1714—1716.

Rise and Character of Lord Townshend—Intimacy with Walpole—Meeting of the new Parliament—Walpole takes the Lead—Draws up the Report of the secret Committee—Manages the Impeachment of Bolingbroke—Ormond and Oxford—Motives for that Conduct—Rebellion—His Activity and Services—Appointed First Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer—Proceedings in Parliament—Trial and Execution of the Rebels.

CHARLES Viscount Townshend, who now took the lead in the administration, was eldest son of Sir Horatio Townshend, who in 1661 was created a peer for his activity in forwarding the restoration of Charles the Second, and in 1682 raised to the dignity of Viscount. Charles took his seat in the house of peers in 1697, attached himself to Somers, and acted so cordially with the Whigs, that when William formed a new administration, principally composed of that party, a rumour was circulated, that he was appointed privy seal.* In 1706, he was nominated one of the commissioners for settling the union with Scotland; in 1707, captain of the yeomen of the queen's guard, and in 1709, accompanied the duke of Marlborough to Gertruydenberg, as joint plenipotentiary, to open a

* Letter from Henry Bland to Robert Walpole, February 3, 1701-2. Orford Papers.

negociation for peace with France; he was deputed in the same year ambassador extraordinary to the states general, and concluded with them the barrier treaty. Soon after the change of the Whig administration he resigned his embassy, was removed from his post of captain of the yeomen, and censured by the Tory house of commons for having signed that treaty. At that period his services and decisive conduct raised his consequence, and he gained great accession of character with his party, on being persecuted at the same time with the duke of Marlborough.

With parts more solid than specious, Townshend was distinguished by unremitted assiduity, and acquired, from long experience, that ability in business, which was the principal object of his ambition. Though plain in his language, and often perplexed in argument, yet he spoke sensibly, and with a thorough knowledge of his subject.* He was firm, generous, disinterested, of unblemished integrity, and unsullied honour: but he was warm, impetuous, and impatient of contradiction. Initiated in diplomatic transactions during the congress at Gertruydenberg and the Hague, he cherished too great an attachment to negociation, and was apt to propose bold and decisive measures, which the temperate and pacific disposition of Walpole was continually employed in counteracting.

During the two months which immediately

* Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son, vol. 2, p. 258.

preceded the queen's death, and the interval which ensued between that event and the arrival of the king, Townshend seems to have secured and governed Bothmar,* and the other Hanoverian agents in England; to have supplanted Sunderland and Halifax, and to have obtained the entire confidence of the king, of which he had previously acquired a very distinguished share, by his great reputation for integrity and talents, by the recommendation of pensionary Heinsius, Slingelandt, and other leading men of the Dutch republic, and by his uniform adherence to the cause of the Protestant succession.

An early and intimate connexion had been formed between Townshend and Walpole; they were distantly related, neighbours in the same county, and educated at the same school; they joined the same party, acted under the same leaders, underwent the same persecutions, and co-operated in the same opposition. The marriage which Townshend had contracted with Dorothy Walpole, in 1713, drew closer the bonds of amity, and added an union of blood to the connexion of party. Walpole had performed too many essential services to the Hanover family, and was too able a speaker in the house of commons, not to occupy a distinguished situation at the accession of George the First, and his connexion with Townshend facilitated his promotion. Soon after the landing of the

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2.

king, he was appointed, as I have already mentioned, paymaster general of the forces, to which was added the paymastership of Chelsea Hospital; very lucrative employments, in which he considerably improved his fortune.

A dissolution taking place on the 5th of January, 1715, the new parliament met on the 17th of March, and a great majority were Whigs. The temper of the governing party, in regard to the prosecution of the Tories, and the resolution of calling the late ministry to account, evidently appeared from the proclamation for dissolving the parliament. The address of the lords contained expressions highly injurious to the queen's memory, and warmly condemned the peace, and measures of the late administration. But the address of the commons was still stronger. "The speaker having reported to the house the king's speech, Walpole expatiated upon the great happiness of the nation, by his majesty's seasonable accession to the crown; recapitulated the mismanagements of the four last years, and concluded with a motion for an address of thanks to the king, conformable to the several heads of the speech."* The motion being carried with only one dissenting voice, it was drawn up by Walpole, and contained these strong expressions:† "It is with just resentment we observe, that the Pretender still resides in Lorrain, and that he has the presumption, by declarations from thence, to stir up your majes-

* Journals. † Chandler.

ty's subjects to rebellion; but that which raises the utmost indignation of your commons is, that it appears therein, that his hopes were built upon the measures that had been taken for some time past in Great Britain. It shall be our business to trace out those measures whereon he placed his hopes, *and to bring the authors of them to condign punishment.*" Part of this address being warmly opposed by the Tory members, on the grounds of its being a reflection on the late queen; Walpole observed,* "that nothing was farther from their intentions, than to asperse the late queen; that they rather designed to vindicate her memory, by exposing and punishing those evil counsellors, who had thrown on that good, pious, and well-meaning princess, all the blame and odium of their counsels." He added, "that they must distinguish between censuring ministers, and condemning the peace in general, and condemning particular persons. That they might, in equity and justice, do the first, because the whole nation was already sensible that their honour and true interest had been sacrificed by the late peace; that in due time they would call them to account, who made and advised such a peace; but God forbid they should ever condemn any person unheard."

Walpole showed, in a subsequent debate, his judgment no less than his zeal. For when Sir William Wyndham endeavoured to prove that the king's proclamation was of dangerous consequences to the very being of parliament, and

being called upon to explain himself, but refusing, many members exclaimed, "To the Tower! To the Tower!" Walpole, foreseeing that he would acquire popularity, should that measure be adopted, observed, "I am not for gratifying the desire which the member, who occasions this great debate, shows of being sent to the Tower; it would make him too considerable: but as he is a young man of good parts, who sets up for a warm champion of the late ministry, and one who was in all their secrets, I would wish him to be in the house when we inquire into the conduct of his friends, both that he may have an opportunity to defend them, and be a witness of the fairness with which we shall proceed against those gentlemen; and that it may not be said, that we take any advantage against them."* It was principally owing to his influence, that although Sir William Wyndham continued to refuse making any explanation, he was only ordered to be reprimanded by the speaker.

The threats of the address, which implied a resolution of prosecuting the late ministers, were soon carried into execution. The papers of Bolingbroke, Strafford, and Prior, having been seized and inspected, secretary Stanhope presented to the house of commons, those which related to the negociations for peace and commerce; and a committee of secrecy, consisting of twenty-one members, being appointed to examine if there was any just cause of impeachment,

* Political State of Great Britain.—Chandler.

Walpole was nominated chairman, and took the lead in the whole business. He drew up the masterly report, which is remarkable for perspicuity of style, method of arrangement, and for digesting, in so short a compass, such a mass of materials. William Shippen having triumphantly insinuated, that notwithstanding the clamour which had been raised against the late ministry, the secret committee would not be able to bring any proofs of their guilt, Walpole indignantly, though intemperately observed, that he wanted words to express the villany of the late Frenchified ministry; and it was judged proper to hasten the report. Accordingly, on the 9th of June, only two months after the house had ordered the committee to reduce the papers into order, Walpole read the report, which he continued without interruption five hours.

It was divided into two parts. The first stated the clandestine negociations with Mesnager, the French plenipotentiary, which produced two sets of preliminary articles; the one private and special, for Great Britain only, the other general, for all her allies: the deceitful offers of the French plenipotentiaries at Utrecht, with the connivances of the ministry; the negociation in regard to the renunciation of the Spanish monarchy; the suspension of arms; the seizure of Ghent and Bruges by the duke of Ormond, and his acting in concert with the French general; the journey of Bolingbroke to France, for arranging a separate *peace;* the negociations of Shrewsbury and Prior, and the precipitate conclusion of the treaty of Utrecht, with a view of

criminating the ministers for having deserted their allies, and betrayed the interests and honour of their country. The second part stated, their secret transactions with the Pretender; a letter from Oxford to the queen, containing a brief account of public affairs from August 6, 1710, to June 8, 1714; the desertion of the Catalans, and some other papers of less importance.*

On the conclusion of the report, Sir Thomas Hanmer moved, that the consideration should be adjourned to the 21st; and being seconded by the friends of the late administration, Walpole observed, "he could not but wonder, that those gentlemen who showed so much impatience to have the report laid before the house, should now press for adjourning the consideration of it. That as for the committee of secrecy, as they had not yet gone through all the branches of their inquiry, he could have wished some longer time had been allowed to peruse and digest several important papers. That for this purpose, they would have deferred three weeks or a month, the laying their report before the house; but that some gentlemen having reflected on the pretended slowness of the committee, since the said report was now before them, they must e'en go through with it."† The motion of Sir Thomas Hanmer being negatived, Walpole impeached Bolingbroke of high treason, and other

* Reports of the secret committee, in the Journals. Abstract of the secret committee, in Historical Register, from 1714 to 1716, vol. 1, p. 164 to 269.—Tindal, vol. 18, p. 246 to 288.

† Chandler.—Historical Register, vol. 1, p. 270.

crimes and misdemeanors; and the question being carried with only a slight opposition of two members, Lord Coningsby stood up and said, "The worthy chairman of the committee has impeached the hand, but I impeach the head; he has impeached the clerk, I impeach the master;" and immediately impeached Robert earl of Oxford and Mortimer, of high treason. On the 21st of June, Stanhope also impeached Strafford of high crimes and misdemeanors.

The current of opinion ran so violently against the late administration, that these prosecutions were carried with little opposition. The drawing up of the articles of impeachment was entrusted to the committee of secrecy, and consequently to Walpole, who, in conjunction with Stanhope, now principally directed the house of commons. The articles of impeachment were severally carried up to the house of lords. Ormond and Bolingbroke having absconded, were attainted. Oxford acted a more manly part, supported his prosecution, defended his conduct with dignity and moderation, and made a calm and firm answer to the accusation of the commons. His defence being transmitted by the lords, was read in the lower house, where Walpole animadverted on it with great acrimony, and drew up a replication.

The prosecution of the leaders of the late administration has been constantly, and in some degree justly, held up by the Tory historians as a striking proof of the spirit of party-resentment and party-vengeance, and no less constantly

defended by the Whigs. The argument, however, which Oxford advanced on his trial, which his partisans adopted in both houses, and which has been since urged in his justification, that he had acted only in obedience to the commands of the queen, was more specious than solid. If admitted in the utmost latitude, it would establish the position, that those who give pernicious counsels to the sovereign, might shelter themselves under the sanction of those very commands which they had dictated. If the voice of the sovereign is sufficient to authorize the servants of the crown in execution of orders, however illegal, it follows that the crown would be arbitrary; and as the king can do no wrong, no minister would be responsible for the abuse of the executive power. But there is another argument against the impeachment of the late ministers, far more convincing. It was forcibly urged by Sir William Wyndham, that the peace had been approved by two successive parliaments, and declared safe, advantageous, and honourable. "Should it be even allowed," he said, "that the measures of the Tory administration were contrary to the honour and interests of the nation, yet with what pretence of justice could ministers be punished? our constitution knows no limits to the power of the king, lords, and commons assembled in parliament; and though a subsequent parliament may annul any laws which a former parliament had decreed, yet it cannot, and ought not to call any ministers to justice for measures

which had been sanctioned by the three branches of the legislature."

It is far from my intention or wish to palliate the injustice, or to sanction the malignant spirit of party, yet I may be allowed to examine the principal motives which might have led men of such approved humanity as Townshend, Devonshire, Stanhope, and Walpole, to adopt these severe measures. The Whigs were firmly convinced, that the late queen desired to restore the Pretender after her death; that Harley and Bolingbroke had, through the secret interest of the Pretender and his agents, obtained the dismission of the Whig administration; that, with a view to remain in power, they found a peace with France to be essentially necessary, and to obtain that peace, they had not scrupled to use the assistance of the court of St. Germain's, and the co-operation of the Jacobites in England; that they had opened secret negociations with France, in contradiction to the leading principles of the grand alliance; their schemes set aside the act of settlement, and introduced a popish sovereign on the throne.

The imprudent conduct of the Pretender increased the animosity of the Whigs, and hastened the prosecution of his supposed adherents. His manifesto, dated August 29, 1714, sent to some of the principal ministers, contained these remarkable expressions: "Upon the death of "the princess our sister, *of whose good intentions* "*towards us, we could not for some time past well* "*doubt; and this was the reason we then sat still,*

" expecting the good effects, which were unfor-
" tunately prevented by her deplorable death."*
Although from the nature of the transaction, and the suppression of many papers, they could not procure such legal proof as would be admitted in a court of justice on the condemnation of a criminal, yet the collateral evidence was fully convincing. It must, however, be confessed, that the part of the report which infers the intention of the late ministry to restore the Pretender, is extremely weak, founded only on vague conjecture and circumstantial evidence; they could not, therefore, venture to lay any great stress on such assertions, as proofs of high treason, but grounded their prosecution on the public events which related to the peace. Though animated by the powerful impressions of a high sense of national disgrace, the recollection of an escape from recent danger, and all the resentment of party, they confined their attacks to a few victims; they impeached only Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Ormond of high treason, and Strafford of high crimes and misdemeanors.

As to Bolingbroke, when Walpole brought forward his impeachment, only one member spoke in his defence, and he was a notorious Jacobite, and when his flight was reported to the house, the bill of attainder passed without a single dissenting voice.

But the situation and character of Ormond were far different. When Stanhope moved for

* Tindal, vol. 18, p. 251.

the impeachment of Ormond, Hutcheson, member for Hastings, made a long speech in his behalf, and urged many palliating circumstances; and Sir Joseph Jekyll, whose principles and conduct had always proved him a sincere friend to the Protestant succession, spoke warmly on the same side. The debate continued above nine hours, and the impeachment was carried only by a majority of forty-seven. The proceedings against Ormond would not, in all probability, have been conducted with much asperity, had he preserved the moderation, which, in his circumstances, would have been becoming; but, on the contrary, while his conduct was under inquiry before the secret committee, he lived in an unsuitable style of magnificence, affected to court popularity, and saw with complacency his name made the signal of tumult, and disloyal exclamation. Even after his impeachment, Devonshire had arranged for him a private interview with the king; but far from availing himself of this kindness, and contrary to the promise extorted from him by his Tory friends, he withdrew from the kingdom, and precluded the possibility of a return to his native country, by instantly entering into the service of the Pretender. Having once embraced that desperate measure, he was too honest and zealous to act like Bolingbroke, and obtain a pardon by sacrificing the interests of his new master, or by entering into a compromise with his prosecutors.

The warmest advocates for the Whigs must

admit, that in the proceedings against the earl of Oxford, party resentment was too predominant. He certainly had, either from inclination, fear, policy, or pique, defeated the attempts of the Pretender's friends, and had been one great cause of securing the quiet succession of the house of Hanover. On the accession of George the First, he had shown such unequivocal proofs of his attachment and triumph,* as disgusted his former friends, and there is not the least doubt, that, had the queen lived, Oxford would have joined the Whigs, and exerted himself in favour of the house of Hanover. But it is a justice due to Townshend and Walpole, to observe, that they strenuously insisted, that Oxford, instead of being charged with high treason, should only be tried for high crimes and misdemeanors; and uniformly opposed the bill of attainder. It likewise appears, from a letter written Nov. 2, 1716, by lord Townshend to secretary Stanhope, that this mode of proceeding was strongly recommended by the lords of the council. "With respect to lord Oxford's trial, the lords are of opinion, that the charge of high treason should be dropped, it being very certain that there is not sufficient evidence to convict him of that crime; but that he should be pushed with all possible vigour upon the point of misdemeanor,

* "The Dragon was thought to show more joy in proclaiming the king, than was consistent with the obligations he had received from ———. He was hissed all the way by the mob, and some of them threw halters in his coach." Charles Ford to Swift, August 5, 1714.

without which, it is certain that the best intentioned of his majesty's subjects will be so broken and disunited, as not to be able to carry on the public service any more this parliament." Oxford acted with great magnanimity during the whole course of his prosecution; and evinced a consciousness that he was innocent of the charge of promoting the succession of the Pretender, by abiding his trial.

The multiplicity of business protracted the sitting of the parliament till the 21st of September. Before the prorogation, the tumults and riots which preceded the Rebellion had already begun. The earl of Mar set up the standard of the Pretender in Scotland, under the name of James the third. His party increased, and became formidable from the number of disaffected. In this crisis, the vigilance and activity of the ministers was aided by the zeal of parliament. The habeas corpus act was suspended; and the earl of Jersey and lord Lansdowne were committed to the Tower.

The arrest of Sir William Wyndham was deemed necessary to prevent an insurrection in the Western counties, where he had considerable influence. On this event Lord Townshend writes to General Cadogan who was negociating the succour of dutch troops.

"Sir William Wyndham surrendered himself a prisoner last night, and is in safe custody, so that we are not under so immediate a fear of an insurrection here in England, especially since the

Regent will give our rebels no manner of assistance or even countenance."*

Townshend evinced peculiar decision of character in this crisis. When the intelligence that Sir William Wyndham was concerned in a projected rising in favour of the Pretender, was laid before the cabinet, the duke of Somerset, whose daughter he had married, anxious that his son-in-law, should not be taken into custody, offered to be responsible for him. The ministers were inclined to give way, for fear of offending a person of the duke's consequence, who, besides his situation of master of the horse, had great influence with the Whigs. The king was present. The proofs against Sir William Wyndham being strong and indubitable, Lord Townshend deemed it necessary that government should not appear afraid to arrest such an offender, however high his rank or connexions, and moved accordingly to have him taken into custody. Nearly ten minutes passed in silence before any one ventured to support the proposal; when at last, two or three rose at the same moment to second him, and the arrest was decreed. As the king retired into his closet, he took hold of Lord Townshend's hand, and said, "You have done me a great service to-day."†

This decisive conduct produced a favourable impression on the public mind, and the parlia-

* Whitehall, October 4, 1714.

† Communicated by Lord Sidney.

ment caught the same spirit;* large supplies were voted by the house of commons; a considerable body of men marched under the command of the duke of Argyle, and troops were obtained from Holland, by the representations of Horace Walpole, who was deputed to the Hague for the purpose. The reader will find, in the histories of the times, an account of the partial defeat of the Rebels under the earl of Mar at Dumblain, by the duke of Argyle, which effectually prevented their junction with those in the south; the total route of their force at Preston, by general Carpenter; the landing of the Pretender in Scotland; his short display of mock dignity at Perth; his flight from Scotland, and return to France, and the final suppression of the rebellion. To enter into the detail of these transactions, does not fall within the compass of the present work. It is sufficient for the author of these memoirs to observe, that vigour in councils, exertion in parliament, readiness to forward every supply, to answer every occasion, and to facilitate the measures of government, increased the reputation of Walpole, and endeared him to his king and country.

In consideration of his services and useful talents, he was, on the 11th of October 1715, appointed first lord commissioner of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer, vacant by the removal of the earl of Carlisle, who had succeeded on the death of Halifax. He was raised to this high station at a very critical

* See State Trials, vol. 1. and Hist. Register.

juncture; a rebellion in the kingdom; a faction secretly aiding and abetting the Pretender; divisions in the cabinet, and a disaffected body among the Whigs, already preparing the schism which broke out in the ensuing year. In the latter part of his life he often adverted to the difficulty he now experienced in conciliating the discordant members of administration, and supporting the house of Brunswick on the throne.

The king's speech; the zealous addresses of congratulation made by both houses on the suppression of the rebellion, the impeachment and condemnation of the rebel lords, engaged the principal attention of both houses, for a considerable time after the meeting of parliament, on the 14th of December; and the petitions in favour of the earls of Derwentwater, Nithisdale, and Kenmure, were urged with such vehemence, and so warmly supported by several members in the house of commons, as irritated Walpole, and induced him to observe, "I am moved with indignation to see that there should be such unworthy members of this great body, who can, without blushing, open their mouths in favour of rebels and parricides, who, far from making the least advance towards deserving favour, by an ingenious discovery of the bottom of the present horrid conspiracy, have rather aggravated their guilt, both by their sullen silence and prevaricating answers. The earl of Derwentwater," he added "pretended, and affirmed, that he went unprepared, and was

drawn unawares into this rebellion; yet to my knowledge, he had been tampering with several people, to persuade them to rise in favour of the Pretender, six months before he appeared in arms;"* and with a view to prevent the house being troubled with any further petitions, which it was determined to reject, Walpole himself proposed an adjournment to the 1st of March,† as it was known that their execution was to take place before that time: the motion met with so strong an opposition, that it was carried only by a majority of seven voices. But Walpole proved his indignation to originate in virtuous and disinterested motives, when he stated to the house that he had been offered £.60,000‡ to save the life of one single person (the earl of Derwentwater). He also spoke, as one of the managers for the commons, in the prosecution of the earl of Wintown, another of the rebel lords; and he seems in every instance to have urged the necessity of adopting severe measures in the present alarming crisis; a mode of conduct so opposite to the natural bias of his temper, which always leaned to the side of humanity, as proved his full conviction, that too much lenity shown to persons taken in flagrant rebellion, would at this period have proved dangerous to the state.

* Oldmixon, p. 631.

† Second Letter to Robert Walpole, esquire, 30.

‡ Political State of Great Britain, 1716.—Chandler.—Tindal.—Etough.

Much has been said on the severity of government to the people who took up arms in favour of the Pretender; and from the accounts of the party writers, it might be supposed, that thousands and tens of thousands had fallen sacrifices to their mistaken principles; that no clemency was shown to *any* of the rebels; no distinction made between the leaders and their deluded followers. But on a candid investigation of the fact, on the authority of the persons who have condemned these measures, the result will be, that *three* lords were beheaded on Tower-hill; that the judges having found many guilty of high treason in Lancashire, *two-and-twenty* were executed at Preston and Manchester; that of a great number found guilty at London, only *four* were hanged.* Such were the lenient proceedings against the rebels, which writers, adopting a peevish expression of the great Lord Somers, have magnified into the proscriptions of Marius and Sylla; and fascinated by the metaphorical eloquence of Bolingbroke, have taken in its full latitude his malignant assertion, "That the violence of the Whigs dyed the royal ermines with blood."† In fact, no government can exist, if *all* rebels taken with arms in their hands are permitted to escape with impunity; and too great lenity under a new king, who was a foreigner, struggling against a competitor claiming the crown

* Smollet, vol. 2, p. 311.

† Smollet.—Belsham's Memoirs, vol. 1, p. 113.

by hereditary right, and supported by all the Roman Catholics, and the principal Tories, would have been not only imprudent, but even inhuman; because it would have held up impunity to those who should raise the standard of insurrection in future. Nor did it ever happen, on the conclusion of a rebellion for a disputed succession, that so few sacrifices were made to the public security.

CHAPTER 12.

1716.

Illness of Walpole—Recovery—Septennial Bill—Impatience of the King to visit Hanover—Repeal of the restraining Clause in the Act of Settlement—Misunderstanding between the King and the Prince of Wales, who is appointed Guardian of the Realm—Departure of the King for Hanover.

THE activity of Walpole's exertions at this important period, and the great corporeal and mental fatigue to which they subjected him, brought on a severe illness, which nearly hurried him to the grave. His recovery was at length effected, but its progress was so gradual, that he was, for a long time, incapacitated from attending to the business of the nation. His restoration to health was forwarded by a temporary retreat to his favourite residence at Chelsea, from which place, he writes to his brother, in these terms. "I have been here about ten days, and find so great a benefit from the air, that I gather strength daily, and hope as much time more will recover me from the lowest and weakest condition that ever poor mortal was alive in, and I shall be able to get to town and do business again."* Congratulations on the reco-

* Walpole Papers.

very of a man, to whom the Protestant establishment owed so much, and who was the soul of his party, flowed in from all quarters. Numerous verses were made on the event, and Rowe, the great dramatic poet, did not disdain to write a ballad on the occasion.*

During this interval, the Septennial Bill was brought into parliament. Although Walpole was not able to support this measure in the house of commons, yet it had been previously arranged with his concurrence, and as he also constantly opposed the repeal, it has always been justly considered an act of his administration.

This memorable bill, which is to be considered as the bulwark of our civil and religious liberties, because it effectually supported the house of Brunswick on the throne; was undoubtedly one of the most daring uses, or, according to the representations of its opponents, abuses of parliamentary power that ever was committed since the revolution: for, it not only lengthened the duration of future parliaments, but the members who had been elected only for three years, prolonged, of their own authority, the term of their continuance for four years more.† The

* See Collection of Whig Ballads, or Pills to purge State Melancholy, part 2.

† This has been thought by many an unconstitutional exertion of their authority; and the reason given is, that those who had a power delegated to them for three years only, could have no right to extend that term to seven years. But this has always appeared to me to be a fallacious mode of considering the subject. Before the triennial act, 6 W. & M. the duration of parliament was only

great body of the Whigs, influenced by these considerations, were, at the first proposition, averse to the measure, and did not agree to support it, till mature deliberation had convinced them of its necessity. During the debates which took place on this occasion, the arguments of opposition and defence, were not unequal to the importance and dignity of the subject. We, who live at this distance of time, without being heated by the warmth of party, without sufficiently considering the temper and state of the nation, and without weighing the peculiar circumstances which occasioned its introduction, must confess, that in theory, the arguments of those who opposed it, are the most specious and convincing; but if we recur to the events of the times, and the state of the country, we must applaud the wisdom of those who sacrificed speculation to practice. It is the remark of a judicious author, "That the act of septennial parliaments was passed, when the kingdom was threatened with an immediate invasion, when a rebellion had but just been quelled, and when the peace and safety of the nation depended on the use of this power by parliament. Such was the opinion of the people at that time, and the act

limited by the pleasure or death of the king; and it never can be supposed that the next or any succeeding parliament, had not the power of repealing the triennial act; and if that had been done, then, as before, they might have sat seventeen or seventy years. It is certainly true, that the simple repeal of a former statute would have extended their continuance much beyond what was done by the septennial act.

Blackstone's Commentaries, v. 11. p. 189, *Christian's Edition.*

met with general approbation, from a general conviction of its necessity."*

That the necessity must have been great and evident, appears from the consideration, that it was supported by men of the first rank, independence, and probity in the kingdom; that in the house of lords, where it was proposed by the duke of Devonshire, were only 36 voices against it; and that, on being sent to the house of commons, there was a majority of 264 against 121. But whatever opinion might be formed on the justice of the right exercised by parliament, in repealing the triennial act and substituting septennial parliaments, yet it can scarcely be contested, that it has in effect been highly advantageous to the well-being of the legislature, and to the real interest of the nation. The speaker, Onslow, who was no ill judge of parliamentary proceedings, was frequently heard to declare,† That the passing of the septennial bill formed the era of the emancipation of the British house of commons from its former dependence on the crown and the house of lords. From that period it has risen in consequence and strength.‡

We who live to enjoy the benefits of an act, which has greatly contributed to set bounds to faction, which has relieved us from the mischievous effects of too frequent elections, and

* Adams's Letter against Paine.

† Communicated by Sir George Colebrook.

‡ See Walpole's farther justification of this measure in his memorable speech on the motion for a revival of the triennial parliament, chap. 42.

from the interference of foreign powers; which has given permanence and independence to our councils, and prevented those frequent changes of men and measures, which left us open to every fluctuation of public sentiment, to every impulse of craft and artifice, we ought not too severely to scrutinize the arguments which were used in defence of a measure recommended by the necessity of the times, and which subsequent experience has demonstrated to be no less beneficial and prudent, than bold and decisive. The immediate effect is best ascertained by the unceasing clamours of a desperate faction, whose hopes were at once destroyed by a step which placed at a great distance the chance of influencing the public mind, and producing dangerous ferments by the accustomed means of popular delusion. History enables us to ascertain its more remote consequences; and whoever fairly considers the permanence of peace, the energy of war, and amelioration of jurisprudence which have resulted to the nation; the wisdom of counsel, boldness of eloquence, and increase of importance which have distinguished the commons, since the period of its formation, must acknowledge that many of the most inestimable blessings of our constitution are to be attributed to this act, which originally appeared to invade its first principles. It is to be hoped, that there are few persons who would desire to replunge the nation into that feverish state which attends frequent elections in cities and counties, and to revive that perpetual enmity

which must arise from the frequent agitation of contradictory interests, and the investigation of claims, which can hardly be once decided, before they are again contested.

Although a question like this cannot be decided by the opinion of any individual; yet surely the judgment of lord Somers, the constant friend of liberty, and the oracle of the revolution, is entitled to some respect, and the time and manner of giving it, render it peculiarly interesting. While the bill was in agitation, Dr. Friend, the celebrated physician, called on lord Townshend, and informed him that lord Somers was at that moment restored to the full possession of his faculties, by a fit of the gout, which suspended the effect of his paralytic complaint. Townshend immediately waited on Somers, who, as soon as he came into the room embraced him, and said, "I have just heard of the work in which you are engaged, and congratulate you upon it; I never approved the triennial bill, and always considered it in effect, the reverse of what it was intended. You have my hearty approbation in this business, and *I think it will be the greatest support possible to the liberty of the country.*"*

The impatience of the king to visit his German dominions now became so great, as totally to overcome every restraint of prudence, and suggestion of propriety, and imperiously to demand indulgence, though the unsettled state of the

* Communicated by lord Sidney, and Charles Townshend, esq. who frequently heard this anecdote related by their father.

public mind, from the effect of rebellion, hardly yet entirely suppressed, and the prejudice excited by the new measures, both of legislation and prosecution, should have opposed insuperable obstacles to his desire. The ministry were considerably embarrassed on this occasion; and drew up a strong remonstrance, representing the inconveniences which would result from the projected journey. This remonstrance, however, not only failed of success, but so far exasperated the king, that he declared he would not endure a longer confinement in this kingdom. In these circumstances, the ministry could not venture to make any further opposition. When the act was passed, which settled the succession on the house of Brunswick, it was accompanied with various restrictions, limiting the future sovereign in several instances. Some of these restrictions had been repealed during the reign of queen Anne. But the clause which restrained the king from quitting the kingdom, without consent of parliament, still subsisted. It must be allowed to have been a necessary limitation, and its continuance would have been highly beneficial to the true interests of England. For no circumstance more impeded public business, or more alienated the public mind, than the frequent visits which the two first sovereigns of the house of Brunswick made to the electorate of Hanover. This predilection to their native country, was in them both natural and excusable; yet, for the benefit of England, it ought to have been confined within due bounds. Although it

is not probable that the parliament would ever have withheld their consent; yet the necessity of obtaining it would doubtless have checked the too frequent repetition of the demand, and have prevented the absence of the sovereign in times of public emergency. But at the present juncture it was considered more respectful to obtain a repeal, than to subject the king to the necessity of requiring a parliamentary consent, for which messages must have been sent to both houses, before each voyage. When the motion was made by Sir John Cope, to repeal the restricting clause, and seconded by Hampden, it passed unanimously, not a single member, amongst many who were dissatisfied with the succession of the Hanover line, venturing to make the slightest opposition to the repeal of a clause, which, however conformable to the hopes of the nation, could not but be considered as invidious and disgraceful to the new sovereign. The ministers were often obliged to make the most pressing remonstrances, as well to prevent the absence of the king, as to hasten his return; these remonstrances were often ineffectual, but always offensive; and Walpole, during the course of his administration, lamented an evil which he had in vain attempted to remedy, and which nothing but the continuance of the restraining clause, or an absolute cession of the electorate, could have prevented. Some authors in treating of these long and frequent absences, have thrown out reproachful suggestions on the framers of the act of settlement, for not insisting

that a foreign prince should resign his continental dominions before he assumed possession of the crown. Such a provision did not escape the sagacity of the legislators, and would, most probably, have been carried into effect, but for the obvious certainty that no prince would renounce the quiet possession of his continental dominions, however small, to acquire the brilliant, but precarious dignity of sovereign of a large kingdom, exposed to the evils of a powerful faction, and the dangers of a disputed succession. These considerations deterred the framers of the bill from proposing a measure, which would infallibly have frustrated all their other efforts for the preservation of our civil and religious liberties.

This difficult point being adjusted, another question, of equal delicacy, occurred, which related to the method of conducting the government during the king's absence. The most obvious and natural method was, the appointment of the prince of Wales to the regency; but this measure was obstructed by an unfortunate jealousy which the king entertained of his son.

This misunderstanding had already commenced at Hanover, before the death of queen Anne. The electress Sophia had often behaved to George the First with distance and reserve, and did not always consult him in regard to the affairs of England. She was extremely fond of her grandson, and in several instances of great importance, had acted in concurrence with him alone, and particularly had demanded the writ

for him to sit in the house of peers, as duke of Cambridge, without the knowledge,* or against the inclination of George the First. This preference of her grandson, naturally created a coldness between the father and son, which was afterwards increased by the artful proposal of the Tories, in voting the civil list, that a separate revenue of £.100,000 per annum should be settled on the prince of Wales. The motion was negatived by the influence of the Whigs.† The eagerness which the prince expressed to obtain the title and office of regent, augmented the disgust of the king. Conscious that the prince was instigated in most of his proceedings by the duke of Argyle, his groom of the stole, he insisted on the dismission of the duke. With these impressions, the king was unwilling to entrust him with the government, without joining other persons in the commission, and without limiting his authority by the most rigorous restrictions. With a view of forming a regency under those conditions, he submitted his wishes, through the channel of Bernsdorf, to the council. Their answer on this subject, declared, " that, on a careful perusal of precedents, finding no instance of persons being joined in commission with the prince of Wales, and few, if any restrictions, they were of opinion, that the constant tenour of ancient practice could not

* Communicated by lady Suffolk, who was then at Hanover, to the late earl of Orford. See also Chap. 8. and Clarendon's Letter to Secretary Bromley, Correspondence, Period I.

† Chandler.

conveniently be receded from."* Although he reluctantly submitted to consign to the prince the sole direction of affairs; yet instead of the title of regent, he appointed him *guardian of the realm and lieutenant*, an office unknown in England since it was enjoyed by Edward the black prince.†

Having made this arrangement, and removed the duke of Argyle from the household of the prince, and from the command of the army in Scotland, he committed to Townshend and Walpole the principal direction of affairs, and accompanied by secretary Stanhope, took his departure from England on the 9th of July, and arrived on the 15th at Hanover. Before his departure he sent written instructions to the prince, exactly defining the extent of his powers, and particularly laying down rules for his conduct in case it should be necessary to hold a session of parliament.‡

* Letter from Lord Townshend to Bernsdorf. Correspondence, Period II.

† Political State of Great Britain, 1716.—Tindal.

‡ A copy of this Letter in French, in the hand-writing of Mr. Poyntz, is preserved in the Marlborough Papers. A translation is given at the end of this Volume.

CHAPTER 13.

1716.

State and Disunion of the Ministry—Cabals of Sunderland—Intrigues and Venality of the Hanoverian Junta—Characters of the Duchess of Kendal and the Countess of Darlington, Bothmar, Bernsdorf, and Robethon—Resisted by Townshend and Walpole.

WE have hitherto contemplated the ministry in which Townshend and Walpole took the lead, in the highest degree prosperous and respectable. It would naturally be supposed, that union and tranquillity in the cabinet were indispensably necessary to produce such wise counsels and vigorous measures, but this supposition is not verified by fact. The seeds of discontent had already taken root, and were bringing to maturity by the petty intrigues and selfish cabals of those Hanoverian mistresses and ministers who had followed the fortunes of the king.

Somerset was removed from his post of master of the horse, on account of some indiscreet expressions on the arrest of his son-in-law, Sir William Wyndham. Nottingham, whose Tory principles could never coalesce with a Whig administration, and whose vehement interference in favour of the condemned rebel lords had given offence, was dismissed from the presidentship of the council.

The earl of Halifax had estimated his services and talents at so high a rate, that he expected to have been appointed lord high treasurer: created first-commissioner, he was highly chagrined; nor was his disgust removed by the garter, the title of earl, and the transfer of the place of auditor of the exchequer to his nephew. Inflamed by disappointed ambition, he entered into cabals with the Tory leaders, for the removal of those with whom he had so long cordially acted; but his death, on the 10th of May 1715, put an end to his intrigues.*

Marlborough also was among the dissatisfied. Soon after the death of queen Anne, Bothmar says of him, "He is not pleased that he is not of the regency, and that there is any man but the king higher than him in this country;" † his disgust was not diminished after the king's arrival: for although he was appointed commander in chief, and master of the ordnance, yet he did not enjoy the smallest share of power or confidence. During the campaign of 1708, when George the First, then elector of Hanover, commanded the army of the empire, Marlborough had found it necessary to retain the principal recruits and supplies for the army in Flanders, by which arrangement George had been obliged to act on the defensive, and could not distinguish himself by any successful operation against the enemy. This disappointment

* Tindal, vol. 18, p. 371. Horace Walpole to Etough, Correspondence.

† Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2, p. 640.

seems to have rankled in the mind of the king; and from this, joined to other causes, Marlborough, though commander in chief, possessed so little influence, that he could not obtain even a lieutenancy for a friend; and not unfrequently requested Pulteney, who was secretary at war, to solicit in his room, adding, "but do not say it is for me, for whatever I ask is sure to be denied."*

But the principal person who fomented the discontents in the cabinet was, Charles earl of Sunderland, who had espoused Anne, second daughter of the duke of Marlborough, and by that connexion had acquired great consideration in the preceding reign. In the early part of his public career, he had carried his enthusiasm for revolution principles to such a height, that he was even suspected of a tendency to republicanism. Though age and experience had rendered him more moderate, or at least more guarded, yet he never lost his natural vehemence of temper and expression, which gave great offence both to his father and the duke of Marlborough. He was always considered as one of the chief supporters of the Whig interest during the reign of Anne, and he displayed on all occasions the zeal and independent spirit which characterised his party. After distinguishing himself in a diplomatic capacity as embassador to the court of Vienna, he was

* From Dr. Douglas, late bishop of Salisbury, to whom it was communicated by lord Bath.

forced on the queen as secretary of state; and was consequently one of the first who was sacrificed to her Tory partialities, on the removal of the Whig administration. His steady attachment to his political principles, as well as the persecution he underwent, endeared him to his party; and on the successive deaths of Somers, Halifax, Wharton, and the other Whig leaders, he considered himself, and was considered by others, as the great champion of his party. His misunderstanding with lord Townshend may indeed be ascribed to the estimation in which he was held, and his own consciousness of the services he had rendered to the House of Hanover.

At the accession of George the First, Sunderland was led to expect that he should be placed at the head of the administration, and become the person under whose auspices the new cabinet was formed. Bothmar had represented him as a nobleman who had shown invariable attachment to the new king. He had at first recommended him to be lord lieutenant of Ireland, and Townshend to be secretary of state; but on Sunderland's expressing his desire to hold the seals, Bothmar proposed that Townshend should be provided with another place. This arrangement was suggested on the 13th of August, yet on the 31st of the same month, Bothmar expressed his wishes to Robethon, that the post of secretary should be given to Townshend, though Sunderland had asked for it.* In fact, the king

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2.

was at this period influenced by Bothmar, Bothmar was wholly governed by Townshend, and the new administration was settled by him. Although Sunderland was received with singular attention by the king on his arrival in England, yet he was mortified by the omission of his name among the lords justices added in the list communicated by Bothmar to the seven great officers of the realm. The aspiring Sunderland, under whom Townshend had hitherto acted a subordinate part, could not brook this preference. He did not indeed openly show his disgust, yet he scarcely took any active share in defending the measures of government: he who was before accustomed to make a conspicuous figure in every debate, seems to have remained uniformly silent; and from the accession of the new king till the beginning of 1717, his name seldom occurs in the proceedings of the House of Lords. He had been nominated lord lieutenant of Ireland, which he regarded as a species of banishment, and as far below his expectations. Soon after the death of the marquis of Wharton he was appointed privy seal, but his promotion to this high office did not remove his disgust.

To these discontents Walpole alludes in a private letter to his brother Horace, on the removal of Nottingham.* "I don't well know what account to give you of our situation here. *There are storms in the air, but I doubt not, they will soon be blown over.*" In this instance, how-

* Walpole Papers.

ever, his prediction was not verified; Sunderland increased his party with a number of disaffected persons. He particularly gained among the Whigs, Carleton, Cadogan, Lechmere, and Hamden; courted the Tories; entered into cabals against his colleagues; and was prepared to use all his efforts, and employ any opportunities which might offer, to prejudice the king against them :* nor were such means and opportunities long wanting.

One of the greatest difficulties which Townshend and Walpole had to encounter, arose from the management of the German junta, who principally governed the king. This junta, at his accession, and for some time after, consisted of his two mistresses, the duchess of Kendal and the countess of Darlington, and his German ministers and favourites.

Erengard Melesina, baroness of Schulenburg, and princess of Eberstein, was the favourite mistress of George the First, when electoral prince, and after his separation from his wife, the unfortunate Sophia, princess of Zell, he is said to have espoused her with his left hand, a species of marriage not uncommon in Germany. She accompanied the king to England, and was, in 1716, created baroness of Dundalk, countess and marchioness of Dungannon, and duchess of Munster of the kingdom of Ireland; in 1718, she was made a peeress of Great Britain, by the

* Walpole's Letter to Stanhope, July 30, 1716.—Correspondence, Period II.

title of baroness of Glastonbury, countess of Feversham, and duchess of Kendal.* He was accustomed to transact business at her apartments, as Louis the Fourteenth did in those of Madame de Maintenon; and therefore her influence was so considerable, that the different parties in the cabinet, and the leaders in opposition, paid her the most obsequious court. Even the empress of Germany maintained a private correspondence with her, with a view to induce the king to renew the connexion between England and the house of Austria. This ascendancy is the more surprising, when it is considered that she did not possess much beauty of countenance, or elegance of person; for the electress Sophia, pointing her out to Mrs. Howard, said,† "Do you see that maukin? you would scarcely believe that she has captivated my son;" and according to Sir Robert Walpole, (whose opinion, however, as he did not readily speak in any foreign language, and she could not converse in English, must be received with caution) her intellects were mean and contemptible. Money was with her the principal and prevailing consideration, and he was often heard to say, she was so venal a creature, that she would have sold the king's honour for a shilling advance to the best bidder.‡ She affected great and constant regularity in her public devotions,

* Extinct peerage. † From Lord Orford.

‡ Etough.—Minutes of a conversation with Sir Robert Walpole.

frequently attending several Lutheran chapels in the same day. The minister of the Lutheran church in the Savoy, refused to admit her to the sacrament; but she was received at the church of the same communion in the city.*

His other mistress was Sophia Charlotte, daughter of the count of Platen, and wife of baron Kilmanseck, master of the horse, from whom she was separated. On the death of her husband, in 1721, she was created countess of Leinster in the kingdom of Ireland, and in 1722, made a British peeress by the title of baroness of Brentford, and countess of Darlington.† She was a woman of great beauty, but became extremely corpulent as she advanced in years. Her power over the king was not equal to that of the duchess of Kendal; but although she was younger, and more accomplished than her rival, several persons about the court, conceiving her influence to be greater than it really was, ineffectually endeavoured to rise by her means. Her character for rapacity was not inferior to that of the duchess of Kendal. She patronized men of Letters, and admitted into her society persons of both sexes; different ranks who were conspicuous for talents, vivacity, or information. Such parties attended a weekly supper at her apartments, at which the king assisted, and laid aside his royal dignity. We are informed by a lady of the name of La Vie, who was sometimes

* Etough. † Extinct peerage.

present, that the conversation was lively and unrestrained.*

The Hanoverian ministers, who had the principal influence over the king, were baron Bothmar, count Bernsdorf, and Robethon. Baron Bothmar had been the king's principal agent in England during the latter years of queen Anne. By his advice George had almost uniformly acted; and it was principally owing to his interposition, that Townshend was entrusted with the chief power, and became the head of the new administration. Bothmar conceiving that his services could not be too amply rewarded by the minister to whose elevation he had greatly contributed, took umbrage on finding that his recommendations were often rejected, and that sufficient respect was not paid to his opinion.

Count Bernsdorf, of an illustrious family, solid talents, and considerable experience, was the minister whom George consulted in foreign affairs. On his arrival in England, he was anxious to increase his consequence, and improve his fortune. But finding his views opposed by Townshend and Walpole, he became disgusted, and joining with Bothmar and the mistresses, was prepared to forward any attempt to drive them from the helm.

The party was farther strengthened by the accession of Robethon, the king's French secre-

* This and the former anecdote are related in a letter from lady Blayny to the late duchess of Marlborough, from the information of Mademoiselle La Vie herself, who had been her friend and governess.

tary. This man was of a refugée family, and became private secretary to king William, from whose service he entered into that of the house of Brunswick. He soon became confidential secretary, first of the duke of Zell, and afterwards of George the First, when elector of Hanover, and was the person employed in carrying on the confidential correspondence with England.* This private intercourse ensured to him a considerable ascendancy over his master; and being a man of address, great knowledge of mankind, and well acquainted with the leading members in both houses of parliament, he was enabled to act a conspicuous part. His situation with the king rendered him insolent and presumptuous; his necessities were great, and his venality was so notorious as to excite the displeasure, and call forth the remonstrances of Townshend and Walpole; consequently, he became their inveterate enemy, and zealously promoted the views of Sunderland.

To these persons of ostensible consequence, must be added two Turks, known by the names of Mustapha and Mahomet.† They had been

* Macpherson's Papers, vol. 2.

† Pope has mentioned one of these Turks in terms of approbation, in his Moral Essays, Epistle 2nd, to a lady.

"From peer or bishop 'tis no easy thing,
"To draw the man who loves his God or king.
"Alas! I copy (or my draught would fail)
"From HONEST MA'HMET, or plain parson Hale."

Portraits of the two Turks are on the great stair-case in Kensington palace. Lysons's Environs of London, vol. 3, p. 103.

taken prisoners by the Imperialists in Hungary, and had served the king when electoral prince, who was wounded in that campaign, with such zeal and fidelity, that he took them to Hanover, brought them to England, and made them pages of the back stairs. Their influence over their master was so great, that their names are mentioned in a dispatch of count Broglio to the king of France, as possessing a large share of the king's confidence. These low foreigners obtained considerable sums of money for recommendation to places.

These mistresses, ministers, and favourites, coming from a poor electorate, considered England as a kind of land of promise, and at the same time so precarious a possession, that they endeavoured to enrich themselves with all possible speed.* With this view they sold their influence over their master at a high price, and disposed of all the places and honours which the king could confer, without the intervention of his English ministers. Their venality arose to so great a height, as obliged Walpole to remonstrate against them; but the king almost sanctioned the abuse, by replying with a smile, "I suppose you are also paid for your recommendations."† Private emoluments, and concealed

* During the whole reign of George the First, after the resignation of the duke of Somerset, no master of the horse was appointed; the profits of the place were appropriated to the duchess of Kendal. The emoluments of the mastership of the buck hounds, were also reserved for one of the Germans.

† From Lord Orford.

advantages, did not however satisfy their rapaciousness; they began to aim at the honours of rank and pre-eminence. The ladies were desirous of being made peeresses; Bothmar and Bernsdorf, aspired to a seat in the house of lords; while Robethon, affected to content himself with the title of baronet. To these pretensions, which the conduct of William had sanctioned, the act of settlement presented an insuperable barrier. Interest soon enabled them to discover that the regulations of that act did not extend to Ireland; the baroness of Schulenburg was gratified with the title of duchess of Munster, and the Irish establishment loaded with pensions. But this advancement did not satisfy that ambitious woman, who was less gratified by the title, than irritated against Townshend and Walpole, for opposing her demand of being created an English peeress. The ministers and secretary, animated with a similar rancour, behaved with great insolence towards the leaders of the cabinet, insomuch that Walpole once, in the presence of the king, rebuked the presumption of an impertinent assertion, by the stern reproof, "Mentiris impudentissime." In consequence of these repeated altercations, the Hanoverian crew endeavoured to counteract, by their intrigues, the influence of Townshend and Walpole, and infuse into the king's mind, such suspicions and prejudices as, assisted by other intrigues, ended in the dismission of those able ministers.

These, and many other mischiefs, which were

the necessary consequences of the introduction of a foreign family, cannot be concealed or controverted. Yet, while we relate and deplore them in their full latitude, let us not so far forget the blessings derived from the same source, as to overlook our escape from still greater evils. This event, which was occasionally productive of considerable inconveniences, was the price paid for the preservation of our religion and constitution. The option was necessarily made between Hanover and Rome; between civil and religious liberty, accompanied by temporary disadvantages, or papal and despotic tyranny, followed by sure and permanent degradation.

CHAPTER 14.

1716.

Acquisition of Bremen and Verden—Alliances with France, the Emperor, and Holland.

HANOVER now became the centre of the most important negociations. The two great objects were, to complete the acquisition of Bremen and Verden, and to secure tranquillity at home, by a strict union with France.

At the peace of Westphalia, the archbishopric of Bremen, and bishopric of Verden, were ceded to Sweden. But their commodious situation, between the territories of the house of Brunswick and the sea, rendered them a desirable object of acquisition to the dukes of Zell and Brunswick, and those princes had formed several attempts to obtain possession, but had always failed of success. At length George the First obtained what his ancestors could not accomplish. Frederic the Fourth of Denmark, having in 1712, conquered Holstein, Sleswic, Bremen, and Verden, and unable to retain them, or even to resist the arms of Sweden, on the return of Charles the Twelfth from Turkey, found it prudent to cede a part, that he might not be deprived of the whole. He accordingly concluded a treaty, which was

ratified on the 17th of July, 1715, with George, as elector of Hanover; by which it was agreed that Bremen and Verden should be put into the possession of the king of England, on the condition of paying £.150,000, and declaring war against Sweden. In consequence of this treaty, George joined the coalition against Sweden, and a British fleet was dispatched to the Baltic, with the pretence of protecting our trade against the Swedish depredations, but for the real purpose of compelling Sweden to accept a sum of money as an equivalent for those dominions.

The king of Sweden, provoked at the conduct of George the First, and well aware, that in the capacity of elector only, he would not have joined the confederacy against him, directed his efforts of vengeance against the English; his ministers at London, and at the Hague, caballed with the disaffected in England, and preparations were making to invade Great Britain with a considerable army, in favour of the dethroned family.

The Pretender did not fail taking advantage of this transaction, to render the new king odious to his English subjects;* and he artfully observed, in his new manifesto, "Whilst the principal powers engaged in the late wars enjoy the blessings of peace, and are attentive to discharge their debts, and ease their people, Great Britain, in the midst of peace, feels all the load of a war; new debts are contracted, new armies are raised at home, Dutch forces are brought

* Tindal, vol. 18, p. 451.

into these kingdoms; and *by taking possession of the Duchy of Bremen, in violation of the public faith*, a door is opened by the usurper to let in an inundation of foreigners from abroad, and to reduce these nations to a state of dependence on one of the most inconsiderable provinces of the empire."

The advocates for Townshend and Walpole, have asserted that they uniformly counteracted the acquisition of Bremen and Verden, and that their opposition to that favourite object of Hanoverian politics, was the principal cause of their subsequent disgrace. But whatever blame or merit results from that measure, attaches to them; for I discover among the papers committed to my inspection, unequivocal proofs, that they approved, in the strongest manner, the proposed acquisition.* Slingelandt, afterwards pensionary of Holland, and the confidential friend of lord Townshend, had declared, in a letter dated March 10, 1717, "As much as the crown of Great Britain is superior to the electoral cap, so much is the king interested to sacrifice Bremen and Verden for a peace, rather than continue any longer in a war." But Townshend was so far from approving the sacrifice, that he observed in his answer, March 17; "I am of opinion, that every attempt should be made to induce the king of Sweden to make peace, without depriving him of any of his dominions situated out of the empire; for in regard to his German provinces, I must tell you frankly, without any partiality to the pretensions of the

*. Townshend Papers.

king, but simply with a view to the interests of Great Britain and Holland, that we must not suffer Sweden to retain any longer those gates of the empire, which, since the peace of Westphalia, she has never made use of but for the purpose of introducing confusion and disorder, or of turning Germany from the pursuit of its true interests against France." And in another part of the same letter, he adds, "I lay it down as a principle, that for the advantage and tranquillity of Europe, the king of Sweden ought to be deprived of those provinces which have supplied him with the means of doing so much mischief."

Horace Walpole, in his pamphlet, "The Interest of Great Britain steadily pursued," has amply expatiated on this subject, and explained the motives which induced his brother to favour this purchase. "It is the interest of this country," he observes, "that those two provinces, which command the navigation of the Elbe and Weser, the only inlets from the British seas into Germany, and which, in case of any disturbance in the North, are most capable of protecting or interrupting the British trade to Hamburgh, should rather be annexed to the king's electoral dominions, than remain in the hands of Denmark, who has frequently formed pretensions on that city; or of Sweden, who has molested our commerce in the Baltic."

The next great object which the British cabinet had in view was, to secure the tranquillity of Great Britain by forming such alliances

with the European powers, as would counteract the intrigues of the Pretender, deprive him of foreign assistance, and awe his followers into submission

Townshend and Walpole were well aware, that the danger of invasions and interior troubles, did not so much proceed from the efforts of the disaffected at home, as from the hopes of assistance from France. If the prospect of French interposition could be removed, or the effect counteracted, tranquillity would be the necessary and unavoidable consequence. To attain that great end, only two methods could be adopted: the one to form so intimate a connexion with the Emperor and Holland, as to set France at defiance; the other to secure the friendship of France, and to employ her public and private efforts, which had hitherto either openly or covertly promoted the restoration of the dethroned family, and encouraged the efforts of the Jacobites in Great Britain, against that very family, and in support of the Protestant succession.

No charge was ever more frequently or more violently urged against the principles of the administration, which Walpole either directed, or in which he co-operated, than that of deserting the house of Austria, our natural ally, and of joining with France, our inveterate enemy. I shall therefore lay before the reader the motives which induced the two brother ministers to prefer, at this particular juncture, the connexion with France to the union with the House of

Austria. To Townshend and Walpole is undoubtedly due the credit or reproach of having first formed the project of that alliance, and of having carried that scheme into execution, in opposition to the opinion of Sunderland and Stanhope, and in direct contradiction to the first views of the Hanoverian ministers.

The death of Louis the Fourteenth, on the 1st of September, 1715, had given a new aspect to the affairs of France and of Europe, and hastened the final conclusion of those complicated negociations which the treaty of Utrecht had entailed upon a British administration. Although, during the latter days of that bigotted and ambitious monarch, the blessings of peace were the constant theme of his conversation, a passion for glory, and the frenzy of war still lurked in his heart. His cabals with the malcontents in England, his connivance at the intrigues of Ormond and Bolingbroke at Paris, the permission of providing arms and ammunition, and the preparations making at Dunkirk for an attack upon England, were too manifest to escape observation.

In these circumstances, the earl of Stair, the English ambassador at Paris, made secret overtures to the duke of Orleans, who was apprehensive lest the king of Spain should wrest the regency out of his hands; and at a meeting with du Bois, the confidential agent of the duke of Orleans,* promised the assistance of England

* Lord Stair's Journal in Hardwicke State Papers, vol. 2.

to secure the regency to the duke on the death of Louis the Fourteenth, and his succession to the crown of France, should the dauphin die without issue. Stair reiterated these assurances in a personal interview with the duke; who solemnly pledged himself not to assist the Pretender, and to demolish the sluices at Mardyke. Similar offers were renewed, in a still stronger manner, on the decease of the king of France. Hints were at the same time thrown out, that the true way to establish a perfect understanding between the two countries, would be to send the Pretender out of Lorraine, and his two adherents, Ormond and Bolingbroke, out of France. But the duke of Orleans had no sooner succeeded in annulling the testament of Louis the Fourteenth, and secured to himself the regency without restrictions, than he ceased to express himself so warm a friend to George the First; but while he gave assurances that he would demolish Mardyke, answered nothing positive with respect to the Pretender, Ormond, and Bolingbroke, and secretly assisted, or at least connived at, the invasion of Great Britain.

When these attempts of the Pretender had failed of success, and the standard of rebellion was overthrown, the regent found it his interest to court the friendship of England,* whose as-

*. The sudden change of behaviour of the regent and his court, occasioned by the suppression of the rebellion, appears in lord Stair's Journal, "A la cour on est tout etonné; les plus sages commencent à traiter le Chevalier de St. George du Pretendant. Il y a deux jours qu'il étoit le roy d'Angleterre par tout, et tout le

sistance might be necessary in securing to him the crown of France in case of the death of Louis the Fifteenth, who was a weak and sickly boy. It was generally suspected that Philip the Fifth would not think himself bound by his renunciation of the French crown; and as Spain, under the administration of cardinal Alberoni, was beginning to awake from her lethargy, and to make vast preparations both by land and sea, du Bois suggested that the sole purpose of these exertions was, to assert the rights of Philip to the crown of France. The regent accordingly renewed his overtures to England; but the king, incensed at his former equivocal conduct, would not cordially listen to his offers, and opened a negociation with the court of Vienna and the States General for a separate defensive alliance. In consequence of these resolutions, the ancient alliance with the United Provinces was renewed at Westminster on the 16th of February; a new defensive treaty with the Emperor was concluded on the 25th of May; and the British cabinet informed the regent, that the departure of the Pretender to the other side of the Alps, was an indispensable preliminary. In vain France attempted to prevent the union of the three powers, by offering to conclude a defensive alliance with Great Britain and the United Provinces, and in case of a war with the Emperor, to observe a neutrality in the Low Countries.

monde avoit levé le masque. Il n'y avoit plus en seul François, quasi personne de la cour, qui mettoit le pied chez moy."
Hardwicke's State Papers, vol. 2. p. 550.

The insidiousness of this proposal, did not escape the observation of Townshend, who, in a letter to Horace Walpole, reprobated it as chimerical and full of delusion;* and expressed a determination to form such alliances with the Emperor and the States General, as would convince the French, that if they had a mind to fall out with one of them, they would certainly bring the rest into the quarrel.

These vigorous measures alarming the regent, induced him to court, with zeal and sincerity, the friendship of England. Stair availed him-

* Letter from Townshend to Horace Walpole, 27th December, 1715. Walpole Papers.

"This morning the three mails, which came in from Holland, brought me your letters of the 27th and 31st N. S. which I have read to his majesty, who was glad to see that the French ambassador was disappointed in his hopes of the great effects his proposal of neutrality for the Austrian Low Countries, in case of a war, would have in Holland. Indeed the project seems so chimerical, and is so full of delusion, that it was hardly fit to be seriously offered by one, or received by the other. And none but France, who is used to contrive such amusing schemes, could pretend to propose to stipulate with a third power, a neutrality for the dominions belonging to another, who may not consent to it. For what could such a convention between the Dutch and the French signify, if the emperor, who is master of the country, should not think it for his interest to mind it? Methinks we are giving opportunities to France to play over the same game they did after the peace of Ryswick, when the terrible apprehensions of a new war, made us and the Dutch run into the measures of the Partition Treaty, which was believed might be a wonderful preservative against a war, but in effect, proved the source and chief occasion of it. We here, the States may be sure, shall not be fond to engage in a new war, who feel the effects of one at present in our bowels; let us, therefore, keep to our old maxims, and unite strongly together. The way to avoid a war is not to be much afraid of one, and to form such an union among the allies, as to let the French see, that if they have a mind to fall out with one of us, they will certainly bring all the rest into the quarrel."

self of these favourable sentiments, to promote the success of the negociation. But his address, and the influence which he had gained over the regent, gave umbrage to Torcy, d'Huxelles, and the French ministers who were averse to the treaty; and they had interest sufficient to have the negociation transferred to the Hague, under the direction of Chateauneuf, the French ambassador, who was hostile to the whole transaction.

Horace Walpole, as minister from England, conducted the business with great ability. He counteracted the intrigues of Chateauneuf, and threw a momentary spirit into the weak and wavering counsels of the Dutch republic. He saw and appreciated the advantages which would result from an alliance with France, in insuring domestic security and foreign tranquillity. He was apprehensive lest the insidious conduct of the regent might so far excite a just, though imprudent indignation in the king and ministry, as to induce them to reject all overtures of accommodation with France, and laboured incessantly to avert what he justly considered so great an evil.*

* « If I may venture to give your lordship my own sentiments upon this matter, it is very naturall to think that France has two views in her present conduct; 1°, if the regent should propose to enter into new engagements with his majesty and the States, and they should accept of his proposall, and make a treaty with him, he may design by that means to amuse and disarm them, and thereby have a better opportunity to attack either; or 2^do^, if the regent's offers of this nature should be rejected, he may hope to take an advantage of such a refusall, and to insinuate, both in England and Holland, that his majesty has a design to keep his forces on foot; and to quarrell with France; by not forgetting what is past, nor being willing to come to a better understanding

In a conference with pensionary Heinsius, of which Horace Walpole gives an account in a private letter to Lord Townshend, he details, in a few words, the advantages which would result to the king and nation, from an alliance with France.*

with the regent; and if such a notion should once take place, it would have a very ill effect in both countrys; but to disappoint France in these two views, may it not be adviseable not to talk directly against an alliance with France, to prevent further mischiefs, at least no further than to show how necessary it is, after the regent's late conduct, to conclude the defensive treaty with the Emperour, preferable to any other whatsoever, since it cannot be expected that his majesty should seek the friendship and confidence of France, after the usage he has received from her; and if the regent should make any proposition for an alliance with his majesty, and the States, it may be so far received as to have it leisurely considered, and his majesty has reason and right enough to insist upon some certain articles to be made part of that treaty, which, if accepted and executed, may putt us out of all apprehensions of the Pretender; and if rejected, will expose the regent's ill designs to all the world. In the mean time, I suppose, that the defensive alliance with the Emperour should be promoted as much as possible, and a force by sea and land, sufficient for our security, be kept up. For as of one side we must take care of not being duped by France, we must on the other avoyd being thought desirous of a quarrell, and irreconcileable, even for our own security, and the preservation of the peace." Walpole Papers.

* "The present situation of affairs in England can by no means be agreeable to him. On one hand, it can't be safe or prudent for his majesty to break his troops and disarm himself, untill he has reason to believe, that France has abandoned the cause of the Pretender; on the other side, the people of England may grow uneasy at the burthen and expense of a standing army; so that it is certainly the intent both of his majesty and his ministry, to have a friendship and confidence with France, that by having nothing to apprehend from thence the government may return to its naturall constitution of guards and garrisons, and enjoying perfect ease and repose; and I added, that it is evident, by his majesty's whole conduct, that he has done all that is possible for him to gain the regent's amity and good will.

Townshend had previously adopted the same sentiments; and it was in a great measure owing to his suggestions, that the British cabinet opened a negociation for a defensive alliance with France. But the deceitful behaviour of Chateauneuf, and the dilatory proceedings of the Dutch, enforced the necessity of more expeditious and decisive measures. Lord Stair dexterously counteracted the intrigues of the French ministers at Paris, by contriving to place the negociation in the hands of du Bois, who repaired to Hanover, where the business was carried on by secretary Stanhope under the immediate auspices of the king. The negociation was conducted with such secrecy and dispatch, that an interval of a few days only elapsed between the arrival of du Bois, and the adjustment of the preliminaries.*

After a few conferences, du Bois agreed, in the name of the regent, to send the Pretender beyond the Alps, and to demolish the port of Mardyke,† called by Lord Townshend, in a letter to Horace Walpole, Aug. 21st, "that

* Correspondence, Period II.

† One of the articles in the treaty of Utrecht, expressly stipulated the demolition of Dunkirk, from which port the trade of England and Holland had been incommoded during the late war. The king of France had literally fulfilled this article; but had, at the same time, opened a new canal at Mardyke, which would have been equally prejudicial to the trade of Great Britain. Prior, at that time embassador at Paris, was ordered to present a memorial, pressing the performance of the 9th article of the treaty of Utrecht. The king of France declared in express terms, that Mardyke was not Dunkirk, and that the treaty of Utrecht did not deprive him of the natural right of a sovereign, to construct such works as he should judge most proper for the preservation of his subjects. The truth is,

terrible thorn in the side of England," on condition of confirming the article in the treaty of Utrecht, which guarantied the succession of the crown of France to the house of Orleans, should Louis the Fifteenth die without issue.

that the English plenipotentiaries had been extremely negligent; in stipulating the demolition of Dunkirk, it could not be their intention that another and a better harbour should be made on the same coast: but that stipulation should have been inserted; and it was natural that all advantages should be taken by the French, on whom such articles were imposed,* and according to Lord Stair,† Prior, embassador at Paris, seemed altogether unknowing as to the affair of Mardyke; to have had no instructions while the canal was making; and to have concerned himself no farther about it, since he delivered the memorials. The earl of Stair prosecuted the affair with greater zeal and vigour; it now became an object of importance, and lord Townshend observes to Horace Walpole, July 31st., "The article of Mardyke is in truth the chief and most essential point for the interest of England, for which his majesty has occasion to desire this alliance."

* Tindal, vol. 18, p. 327, 331.

† Hardwicke's State Papers, vol. 2, p. 528.

CHAPTER 15.

1716.

Situation of Affairs at Home—Conduct of the Prince of Wales—Precarious and perplexed Situation of Townshend and Walpole—Departure of Sunderland—Causes of the King's Displeasure against Townshend and Walpole—Their Opposition to his continental Politics—Walpole's Resistance to the Payment of the German Troops—Intrigues and Arrogance of the Hanoverian Ministers—Sunderland arrives at Hanover—Cabals with the German Junta—Gains Stanhope—Prevails on the King to dismiss Townshend.

WHILE Townshend was thus successfully employed in restoring consequence and dignity to the British negociations abroad, and in securing tranquillity at home; while Walpole was conducting the affairs of finance with wisdom and ability, and laying a plan to reduce the interest of the national debt, an active cabal was undermining the favour of the brother ministers; advantage was taken of the king's proneness to jealousy; every engine was employed against them at Hanover; and after a short, but manly struggle, Townshend was dismissed, and Walpole resigned his employment.

This change in the administration, was derived from the misunderstanding between the king and the prince of Wales; the opposition of the cabinet to some of the plans of con-

tinental politics proposed at Hanover; the intrigues and arrogance of the Hanoverian junta; and the cabals of Sunderland and Stanhope.

On the king's departure, the prince of Wales, in conformity with the king's instructions, had assumed the internal administration of affairs, and of such foreign transactions as could not be carried on at Hanover. The rebellion having been suppressed, and tranquillity restored, the people became gradually more and more satisfied with the new government. The king's enemies imputed this satisfaction, which was the natural consequence of events, to the good conduct of the prince, and likewise affected to spread abroad, that many acts of grace, the opening of the communication from Dover to Calais, and the dispensing with passports, were owing to the same cause. Reports of his affability and condescension to all persons, without distinction of parties, were circulated, with a mischievous intention to decry the coldness and reserve of the king; and his partial acquaintance with the English tongue, was magnified, and represented as a proof of his earnest desire to accommodate himself to the customs of the nation. He increased his popularity by a short progress into Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire, and addresses were preparing in several places, extolling his wisdom in the administration of affairs, and the graciousness of his manners.* These, and other circumstances, together with the extreme popu-

* Tindal, vol. 19, p. 33. 38.

larity of the princess of Wales,* were not concealed from the king, and could not fail to augment the disgust he had already entertained against his son. The prince still farther offended the king, by showing particular attention to the duke of Argyle; by his reserve to the ministers in England, and by the court which he paid to the Tories.

While the ministers were thus exposed to the resentment of the prince, for their superior attachment to his father, rumours were circulated that their favour was declining with the king. In several letters to Stanhope, Walpole bitterly complains of their irksome situation; and, in the extremity of his chagrin, compares himself and his colleagues, to galley slaves, chained to the oar. In this uneasy situation, they judged it necessary for the king's service, to remove the prejudices, and to acquire the confidence of the prince, which their prudence and address had no sooner effected, by destroying the credit of Argyle, than they awakened the suspicions of the king, who was feelingly alive to sentiments of jealousy towards his son.

Another cause of the king's displeasure was, the opposition of the cabinet to the continental politics, and their unwillingness to plunge the country into a war with Russia. A dispute had arisen between the duke and nobles of Mecklenburg, in which the duke was supported by Peter the Great; the nobles by the Emperor, the king of Prussia, and George the First, as elector of

* Political State of Great Britain, vol. 12, p. 140.

Hanover. George was influenced by Bernsdorf, who, being a noble of that duchy, was irritated against the Czar. Though these potentates embraced contrary sides, their views were the same, the possession of the duke's territories.

Those who indiscriminately censure the conduct of Walpole, have not scrupled to assert, that he embarked in every scheme of aggrandizement which interest or ambition might suggest to the sovereign: on the contrary, in this affair, he and Townshend displayed that manly resistance which does honour to their character, and refutes such groundless accusation. In the course of this quarrel, Bernsdorf proposed to Stanhope the wild and daring project of seizing the ships, disarming the forces of the Czar, by means of the Danes, and arresting and detaining his person until his troops should evacuate Denmark and Germany. Townshend reprobated, in the strongest terms, this violent proposal; he represented that the prosecution of the war in the north, would be the ruin of England, declared that parliament could not be induced to sanction such a profusion of the public money, for purposes foreign to the real interests of the nation; recommended a peace with Sweden, and strongly urged the necessity of obtaining that blessing by equivalent restitutions. The freedom of remonstrance used on this occasion, incensed the king, who declared that he considered his dearest interests sacrificed to the parsimony of the English ministry. His resentment was still farther inflamed against Walpole, for declaring

the impracticability of replacing the money advanced for the pay of the troops of Munster and Saxe Gotha, till the receipt of the sums appropriated by parliament to that use. The anger of the king rose so high, that Walpole was reproached with having broken his promise; the minister vindicated himself with becoming spirit, and declared, that though he could not venture to contradict the king's assertion, yet, that if he had ever made such a promise, it had escaped his memory.

The rapacity and ambition of the German favourites had received several checks from the spirit and inflexibility of Townshend and Walpole; they had hoped to appropriate to themselves large sums from the grant of the French lands in the island of St. Christopher, ceded at the peace, and the duchess of Munster had engaged for a sum of money to procure a peerage for Sir Richard Child, a violent Tory. Both these measures were counteracted, to the great mortification of the whole junta. The haughty and interested mistress, accustomed to domineer over the ministers of the electorate, could ill brook to be thwarted by the English cabinet. Robethon displayed his resentment by the most insolent demands, and petulant reproofs,* and even ventured to catechise Lord Townshend, with regard to his motives in the disposition of offices.

Although the earl of Sunderland, soon after

* See Correspondence, Period II. passim. Political State of Great Britain, vol. 12, p. 477.

his arrival at Gohre, secured the powerful aid of the Hanoverian junta, by the promise of obtaining a repeal of the disqualifying clause in the act of settlement; yet his intrigues had no other chance of success, unless he could gain secretary Stanhope, who owed his appointment solely to the influence of Townshend, and the friendship of the Walpoles, and possessed their implicit confidence. As Townshend himself, on account of his wife's pregnancy, declined going to Hanover, his colleague was entrusted with that important service; he was to keep the king steady to his ministers in England, and to watch and baffle the intrigues which might be formed to remove them. Stanhope appeared peculiarly qualified for this task. A long and intimate connexion with Walpole, had bound them in the strictest ties of friendship, and when Walpole recommended him to Townshend, he answered for his integrity, as for his own. Stanhope himself had made no application for the office of secretary. His frequent residence in camps, and skill in the profession of arms, rendered him, in his own opinion, more fit for a military than a civil station; and when Walpole proposed it, he considered the offer as a matter of raillery.* It was not till after much persuasion, and the most solemn assurances, that his compliance would materially contribute to the security of the new administration, that he was induced to accept the post.

One of the principal charges which Stanhope

* From Lord Orford.

had received from his friends in England, was to be on his guard against the intrigues of Sunderland; who had, under pretence of ill health, after the death of his wife, obtained the king's permission to repair to Aix-la-Chapelle. At the time of his departure, he had given the most positive assurances of repentance and concern, for his late endeavours to remove his colleagues, and after the most solemn professions of friendship and union, had condescended to ask their advice for the regulation of his conduct at Hanover, to which place he intended to apply for leave to proceed. Townshend and Walpole suspected his sincerity; they had experienced his abilities; they knew his ambition, and they dreaded the ascendancy which he might obtain, through the channel of the Hanoverians, over the king. But they implicitly trusted in the sagacity and integrity of Stanhope, either to prevent his appearance at Hanover, or, if he came, to counteract his views. Stanhope, however, did not follow their directions; for when Sunderland demanded access to the king, instead of opposing, he promoted the request with all his influence.*

The mode of correspondence adopted, during his continuance at Hanover, sufficiently proved the unbounded confidence placed in Stanhope. Walpole wrote, in his own hand, occasional letters of the most private nature, in which he represented the internal state of affairs, the behaviour of the prince, the sentiments of indivi-

* See Correspondence.—September 8th, Period II.

duals, and the conduct of Bothmar and other persons who were caballing against them. In addition to this mode of communication, Stephen Poyntz, the confidential secretary of lord Townshend, was appointed a supernumerary clerk in the secretary of state's office. His principal employment was, to lay before Stanhope such occurrences and observations as Townshend and Methuen, who acted as secretary of state during the absence of Stanhope, thought improper to be inserted in their public dispatches. He was never to write but through the channel of a messenger, and Stanhope was requested to communicate these letters only to the king, under the strongest injunctions of secrecy, or to withhold them at discretion. With the same precautions, and by the same conveyance, Stanhope was to send, under cover to Poyntz, such particulars as the king might judge improper and inconvenient to be laid before the prince, or the cabinet council.*

In this confidential correspondence, Townshend and Walpole stated freely their objections to the continental politics, declared their dissatisfaction at the interference of the Hanoverians, and their contempt at their venal and interested conduct. They thus put it in his power to betray their private sentiments, and to increase the aversion of the Hanoverian junta. The seduction therefore of Stanhope from his former friends, was a master-piece of art, as the defec-

* Poyntz to secretary Stanhope, 1716. Correspondence, Period II.

tion of the person in whom they placed the most implicit confidence, rendered every attempt to baffle the efforts of Sunderland ineffectual, because the mine was not discovered until it was sprung.

At what precise period, or by what inducement Stanhope was gained by Sunderland, cannot be positively ascertained; but from the general disinterestedness of his character, I am led to conclude, that he did not lightly betray his friends, or yield to the suggestions of Sunderland from venal or ambitious motives. The private information I have received, and the letters which passed between Stanhope and Walpole, seem to prove, that Sunderland had convinced him, that the English cabinet secretly counteracted the conclusion of the alliance with France, that their opposition to the northern transactions was a dereliction of the principles on which the revolution was founded: he was likewise induced to believe that his friend Walpole had broke his word with the king in the affair of the Munster and Saxe Gotha troops.

This coolness of Stanhope towards the two ministers was still further augmented by the transactions in Holland, and the conduct of Horace Walpole, whose frank and open character scorned to disguise his sentiments, and refused to follow orders which he considered as repugnant to honour and plain dealing. He had censured the proceedings at Hanover, in regard to the politics of the north, in terms still stronger than those used by Townshend, and he lamented

that the whole system of affairs in Europe should be entirely subverted on account of Mecklenburg. To Horace Walpole had been intrusted the secret negociation of the defensive treaty with France, and under the strictest secrecy. Afterwards it was thought prudent to remove the negociation to Hanover, where it was conducted by secretary Stanhope himself, and du Bois, and the proceedings communicated to Horace Walpole. During its progress he had solemnly assured the pensionary and greffier, that no treaty would be concluded separately from the Dutch; but the urgency of affairs, and the king's impatience to settle the preliminaries before the regent of France could avail himself of the dissentions with Russia to support the Czar in the affair of Mecklenburg, rendered it impolitic to wait for the dilatory proceedings of the Dutch republic, and full powers were therefore forwarded to him and lord Cadogan, as joint plenipotentiaries at the Hague, to sign the treaty with du Bois, without farther delay. On the receipt of these orders, Horace Walpole earnestly exhorted Sunderland and Stanhope at Hanover, to intercede with the king to dispense with his signing the treaty, and requested lord Townshend to obtain permission of the prince of Wales for his return to England, under pretence of ill health. He declared, in the most positive and unequivocal manner, that no consideration on earth should induce him to comply; that he would relinquish all present and future advantages, and lay his life at the king's feet, rather than be guilty of

so nefarious an action. These repeated remonstrances had their effect, and permission was at length granted from Hanover, that he might depart, and leave to Cadogan the signature of the treaty.

During his residence at Gohre, Sunderland received many marks of favour, and by his consummate address soon acquired the full confidence of the king. He found it no difficult matter to select, from the numerous transactions in which Townshend had been employed, some apparent instances of disrespect, or of neglect in his department. But it is remarkable, that notwithstanding the known zeal of Townshend for the French treaty, that although he was the original adviser and promoter of it, and had gradually surmounted the indifference of the king,* the opposition of Sunderland, the disapprobation of Stanhope, and the objections of the Hanoverian ministers, yet it was now alleged as a crime against him, that he had purposely delayed the signature. This extraordinary imputation was conveyed to him in letters from the king, Stanhope, and Sunderland. The letter from the king is missing, but that from Sunderland, which is printed in the Correspondence,† gives a striking proof of the influence he had already gained over his master, and the natural imperiousness of his character, and is filled with the most harsh and authoritative reproaches.

While the answer to the charge was expected

* Lord Townshend's letter to the king.—Stanhope.

† Correspondence, Period II. November 11, p. 127.

at Hanover, Sunderland urged another subject of complaint, which made a still greater impression, and contributed to the success of his intrigues. He availed himself, with great address, of the misunderstanding with the prince of Wales. He insinuated that Townshend and Walpole were caballing with the duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay; that their repeated remonstrances to draw the king from Hanover, were only so many feints to cover their own insidious designs; that their great object was to detain him abroad; and by pressing the necessity of transacting the public business, to induce him to invest the prince of Wales with fuller authority, who, if empowered to open the parliament, might obtain an increased, permanent, and independent interest. The effect of these representations was aided by the anxious solicitude which the prince discovered, on all occasions, to open the parliament in person, and by his imprudence in pressing Stanhope, by means of a letter from Townshend, to obtain a speedy answer, announcing the king's definitive resolutions.* Other imputations were thrown out by the junta at Hanover, to irritate the king against Walpole in particular. The first which interested the venal attendants of the king, related to the sale of lands in the Island of St. Christopher, the purchase money of which the king wished to reserve, contrary to the advice of Walpole, who recommended him to appropriate it to some branch of the national expenditure. The

* Correspondence.

other charge was of a more serious nature, and rested on the breach of a promise which he was said to have made to the king, of providing immediate supplies for the pay of the Saxe Gotha and Munster troops. The words of Mr. Stanhope to lord Townshend, will best show the mode in which this accusation was advanced, and the effect which it had produced.

"It is very likely," he observes, "that Bothmar may have done ill offices to Mr. Walpole; but the king on that subject tells me, that he spoke himself about it with Mr. Walpole before he left England. It is very possible that the king and Mr. Walpole might mistake one another. But the king says he did apprehend, that Mr. Walpole had told him a way would be found to pay that money. He says, he hath in fact advanced the money. I do therefore beg, that Mr. Walpole and you will think of this matter. If it be necessary that I write a letter to be laid before the cabinet council, let him tell me in what manner he would have me write, and I will immediately send a letter, if he would have it, and do every thing that he and you will let me know of for your service. The concern I have for him makes me wish most earnestly that he will find some way to make this easy, which may and will otherwise give his enemies an opportunity of hurting him. I am sure I have staid in this office much longer than I would have done for your sake and his, and whenever we are to go out of place, let it not be upon such a foot, that the king shall say, Mr. Walpole hath promised

him one thing, and that Mr. Walpole shall say otherwise. I vent my thoughts very freely to you, and will do so while I am in business. You may easily believe me, when I tell you, that considering the present situation I am in, I do not wish that may be long."*

These insinuations, seconded by the Hanoverian mistresses, and ministers, having made a deep impression, Sunderland advised the king to demand of the cabinet council, the heads of the business to be brought forward in the next session; and to declare that he was desirous of passing the winter at Hanover, if any expedient could be adopted for summoning the parliament, and transacting affairs. This demand being forwarded to the minister, the council instantly deliberated on the message, and Townshend, anxious to gratify the inclination of his royal master, transmitted a favourable answer, by his brother-in-law, Horace Walpole, who had just arrived from the Hague. Anxious to convey this dispatch with all possible speed, Horace Walpole quitted London on the 13th of November, the evening of its signature, left the Hague on the 17th, and, travelling night and day, arrived at Gohre on the 22d. He flattered himself with a favourable reception, as the messenger of good tidings, but found the state of affairs far different from that which his sanguine expectations had suggested.

He found the king devoted to Sunderland, and exasperated against his brother and Towns-

* Correspondence, vol. 2. p. 135.

hend, to whom the letters on the delay in signing the French treaty, expressive of high indignation, had just been forwarded. He found him still greatly dissatisfied with their opposition to the plan of northern politics, disgusted with the backwardness of Walpole to advance the subsidies for the troops of Saxe Gotha and Munster, and so strongly impressed with the danger of permitting the prince of Wales to open the parliament in person, as to declare that no consideration should induce him to consent to the grant of discretionary powers for that purpose. He found Stanhope displeased with the conduct of Townshend, and convinced that his negociations for the peace with France, and for the operations in the north, were counteracted by the English cabinet.

The frankness and warmth of his temper, impelled him without disguise to speak plain truths, and to expostulate with a manly freedom and dignified spirit, which astounded Sunderland, and disconcerted Stanhope. He reminded Stanhope in particular, that he owed his high situation to Townshend and his brother; he remonstrated with him for having concurred with their enemies, and warmly vindicated the conduct of Townshend. He candidly avowed, that if blame was incurred by any delay in signing the treaty with France, that blame must attach solely to himself, whose delicacy prevented him from affixing his name to an act, after he had solemnly assured the leading men in Holland, that England would not conclude a

separate treaty. He finally answered for the honour and friendship of the brother ministers in England.

Stanhope, affected with these remonstrances, so forcibly urged by his friend, acknowledged that he had been deceived by false suggestions; spoke of Townshend and Walpole in terms of praise and affection; expressed a high sense of his obligations; requested that what was past might be forgotten, and what was to come might be improved; and promised in the most solemn manner to use his influence with the king, which he represented as very considerable, in favour of those who had committed to him his present trust. Horace Walpole was fully satisfied with these declarations. Stanhope seemed to act in conformity with his promises, and to labour in effacing the ill impressions which the king had entertained of his ministers in England. Sunderland appeared confounded; the Hanoverians abashed; and the king inclined to recover his former satisfaction and complacency.

While these favourable symptoms of returning good will and harmony apparently prevailed, the answer of Townshend to the charges of delaying the signature to the French treaty, arrived at Gohre. To Sunderland's insolent reproofs he did not condescend to make any reply; to Stanhope he wrote only a few lines, testifying his concern and indignation at being betrayed by one in whom he placed the most implicit confidence; but his answer to the king,*

* November 11. See Correspondence, Period II.

contained a full and dignified refutation of the malicious calumnies and misrepresentations of his enemies; and was written in a style and manner, expressing without disguise the high opinion which he entertained of his own character. This letter to the king was accompanied by another from Walpole to Stanhope, justifying himself and his colleague. "There can," he said, "be no greater misfortune than to incur blame and displeasure for those very things, which a man thinks he has deserved well in. But this seems to be the fate of those who serve at a distance."*

He then enters into a vindication of his proposal with regard to the sale of the lands at St. Christopher's; and positively denies, that he had misled the king by any promise relative to the payment of the Saxe Gotha and Munster troops. "I must beg leave to defer entering into any particulars relating to the payment of the troops of Saxe Gotha and Munster, till after my conference with Count Bothmar, because I am sure he dares not deny to me, but that I have showed a more than ordinary readiness to facilitate that matter; and this I am confident I shall be able to tell you he has confessed to me. I must only add one thing, that I am at a loss what to say, when I am told, I promised the king a method should be found out to pay this money. I do not presume to enter into this dispute, but I hope I shall be thought more excusable, when I protest before God, that I

* Correspondence, November 11, 1716, vol. 2, p. 128—135.

cannot recollect that ever the king mentioned one syllable of this to me, or I to him; but my memory must fail me, when his majesty says to the contrary."*

These manly and spirited letters appeared to have their due effect. The king, convinced that he had hastily and unjustly accused lord Townshend, candidly acknowledged his mistake. Stanhope, affected, or pretending to be affected with a letter from his friend Walpole, justifying himself and Townshend from the malicious imputations laid to their charge, renewed his protestations of gratitude and devotion, and requested the interference of Horace Walpole to bring about a thorough reconciliation, and to re-establish the former harmony. The king commissioned him to convey the strongest assurances of restored confidence in his faithful counsellors in England; and Horace Walpole quitted Gohre with a full conviction that all resentment had totally subsided, and that Stanhope was sincere. He was as anxious to return to England with the good tidings, as he had been eager to convey to Hanover the letter from the cabinet council.

His journey being retarded by unforeseen accidents, on the road, he did not reach the Hague till the 8th of September, from whence he apprized Stanhope of his eagerness to return to England, and execute the commission with which he was charged. Notwithstanding a serious indisposition, he continued his journey,

* Correspondence, November 11—22, 1716, vol. 2. p. 133.

and arrived in London December $\frac{11}{22}$. He instantly delivered to Townshend and his brother Stanhope's letters, containing the strongest assurances of devotion and friendship; announced the king's favourable declarations; reconciled all parties, and established, as he thought, the most perfect harmony and good understanding in the cabinet. But he had scarcely communicated this flattering intelligence, before dispatches were brought from Stanhope announcing the king's command to remove Townshend from the office of secretary of state, and offering him the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. As Brereton, who conveyed these dispatches without being apprized of their contents, could not have quitted Gohre more than three days after the departure of Horace Walpole, it was obvious that the latter had been deceived, that the plan for the removal of Townshend had been then settled, and that the solemn promises made by Stanhope were never intended to be fulfilled. A letter from Sunderland to one of his friends, of the same date with those that brought the dismission of Townshend, fully proved the motives which influenced the king to countenance this proceeding. It accused Townshend, Walpole, and the chancellor, of caballing with the prince of Wales and Argyle, and forming designs against the king's authority.* In fact, the letter from the cabinet council, which Horace Walpole had conveyed to Gohre, was the death warrant

* See Townshend's letters to Slingelandt, January $\frac{1}{12}$, 1717. Correspondence.

of Townshend's administration. It contained many expressions and opinions highly unfavourable to the sentiments and inclinations of the king, and wholly opposite to the views of the Hanoverian junta. By the demand that full and discretionary powers should be sent to the prince of Wales, it confirmed the opinion suggested by lord Sunderland, that the object of the ministers in England, was to exalt the son above the father, and to show that the business of parliament could be transacted by the prince of Wales. It irritated the king to such a degree, that the immediate removal of the minister would have been the inevitable consequence, had not the presence of Horace Walpole, and his expostulations with Stanhope, disconcerted the plans of Sunderland. But the favourable impressions which his representations and the manly reply of Townshend had effected, were soon worn off by the suggestions of the Hanoverian junta; the king's jealousy again returned with redoubled force, and Townshend was dismissed.

Townshend received the unexpected account of his dismission with no less surprise than indignation. In his letter to the king, December $\frac{11}{12}$, he announced his resolution to decline the offer of the lord lieutenancy, with great dignity and spirit.

"I have received with deference, and with the utmost submission, your majesty's commands, intimated by M. secretary Methuen, depriving me of the office of secretary of state.

I most humbly demand permission to remind your majesty of what I said, when you did me the honour to confer on me that employment; that I should esteem myself happy, if I had as much capacity as zeal and affection for your majesty's service, in which case I am sure that your majesty would have every reason to be satisfied with my services. I can venture to affirm with truth, that the desire of testifying my gratitude has been the only motive capable of hitherto supporting me under the fatigues of my employment. I am highly sensible of the honour which your majesty confers on me, by condescending to appoint me lord lieutenant of Ireland: but as my domestic affairs do not permit me to reside out of England, I should hold myself to be totally unworthy of the choice which your majesty has been pleased to make, if I were capable of enjoying the large appointments annexed to that honourable office, without doing the duty. I trust that your majesty will grant me the permission to attend to the private affairs of my family, which I have too much neglected. Yet I will venture to assure your majesty, that whatever may be my situation, your majesty will always find me a faithful and grateful servant, anxious to promote, with all his power, your majesty's service; having the honour of being, with the most inviolable attachment, sire, your majesty's most humble, most obedient, and most faithful subject and servant."*

* The French original of this letter is printed in the Correspondence, vol. 2. p. 142.

In a short letter to Stanhope, Townshend calmly reproached him for the duplicity of his conduct, and particularly dwelt on the violation of his promises to Horace Walpole. But Stanhope had to encounter the still severer reproaches from his confidential friend, Walpole. To him he opened himself in a private letter, which was delivered twenty-four hours before that which announced the dismission of Townshend. In this apology he was extremely anxious to justify his conduct, and to attribute his acquiescence to the positive commands of the king, who bitterly complained of the warmth and impracticability of Townshend's temper and manners, and he imputed solely to his own influence, that the disgrace of the minister was softened by the offer of the lord lieutenancy. He took merit to himself for having removed the prejudices which the king had entertained against Walpole, and earnestly exhorted him to employ his interest with lord Townshend to accept the proffered dignity. The reply of Walpole to this insidious apology is written in a manly tone of resentment, and shows his extreme sensibility at this defection of one for whom he entertained so high a regard, and in whom he placed such implicit confidence.

Dear Sir; *Dec.* 12—23, 1716.

Your private letter to me I let not one mortal see. I never read it, but some parts of it astonish me so much that I know not what to say or think. What could prevail on you to

enter into such a scheme as this, and appear to be the chief actor in it, and undertake to carry it through in all events, without which it could not have been undertaken, is unaccountable. I do swear to you that lord Townshend has no way deserved it of you; and even after the letter that came with the king's, I do protest to you, he never treated your conduct in that matter but as a mistake, which, when you were sensible of, your friendship for him would easily prevail upon you to retract. Believe me, Stanhope, he never thought you could enter into a combination with his enemies against him.

"I find you are all persuaded the scheme is so adjusted, that it can meet with no objection from the Whigs. Believe me, you will find the direct contrary true, with every unprejudiced Whig of any consequence or consideration. I perhaps am too nearly concerned in the consequences to gain any credit with you. However, I cannot help telling you, you don't know what you are doing. It is very hard to treat my lord Townshend in the manner you have done; but 'tis more unjust to load him with imputations to justify such ill treatment. Such sudden changes to old sworn friends, are seldom looked upon in the world with a favourable eye. What is given out here and published from letters among you in regard to the prince, I cannot but take notice of, and will stake my all upon this single issue: if one instance can be given of our behaviour to the prince, but what was necessary to carry on the king's service; and we never had a

thought, but with a just and due regard to the king as our king and master; and as for any secret intimacies or management with the two brothers, if there be the least handle, or one instance can be given of it, call me for any *villain*; if not, think as you please of those that say or write this.

"I will say no more, but give you one piece of advice. Stop your hand till you come over, and can hear and see how what you have already done is resented here. I am very sensible in what a manner lord Townshend's refusal may be represented to the king. I think a little coolly, and consider how possible it is for men in a passion to do things, which they may heartily wish undone. I write this as an old acquaintance that still desires to live in as much friendship as you will make it possible or practicable for me. And let me once more beg of you to recollect yourself, and lay aside that passion which seems so predominant in all your actions. I have heard old friends were to be valued like old gold. I never wished any thing more sincerely than to bear that title, and to preserve it with you."

At the same time he wrote a brief reply to lord Sunderland, who claimed the merit of having expatiated on his services to the king.

"My Lord; *London, Dec.* 12, 1716.

"You will give me leave very briefly to acknowledge the favour of yours of the 14th. N. S.

I thank your lordship for the good offices you have done me with the king, and must think myself very unhappy that they were not unnecessary, with this comfort that I hope his majesty will one time be convinced that I have served him with zeal, fidelity, and integrity.

"As for myself, his majesty shall find me doing my duty among his faithful servants here, and waiting with impatience his happy arrival. I am with great respect," &c.

CHAPTER 16.

1716—1717.

Discontents in England and Holland at the Disgrace of Townshend—Sunderland and Stanhope, and the Hanoverians, are alarmed—Apologize for their Conduct—The King prevails upon him to accept the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland—Motives for his Conduct—Townshend and Walpole coldly support Government—Sunderland increases his Party—Townshend dismissed from the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland—Walpole proposes and carries his Scheme for reducing the Interest of the National Debt—Resigns—Many of the leading Whigs follow his Example—Weakness of the new Administration.

THE precipitate manner in which Townshend was removed from the office of secretary of state, was occasioned by a violent burst of resentment and jealousy in the king. But as soon as the first emotions of anger had subsided, and the first raptures of triumph among those who had obtained his disgrace had given way to sober and serious reflection, the whole body began to be alarmed at the fatal consequences which seemed likely to ensue from that event.

Reports were transmitted from England, that these measures had excited very serious discontents and mistrusts amongst the monied men in the city; that the greater part of the Whigs were highly exasperated; that of the cabinet council, Devonshire, Orford, Cowper, Walpole,

and Methuen adhered inviolably to the fallen minister, and that their secession might create a dangerous division, and distract the plans already concerted for the ensuing session. But above all considerations they dreaded the opposition of Walpole, who took a principal lead in the house of commons; and whose financial talents were so well understood, as to render it difficult to supply his place at the head of the treasury at this particular juncture, when he was forming a scheme, which had been highly applauded by the king, for reducing the interest of the national debt.

The apprehensions excited by the change were not confined to England, but extended to foreign parts, particularly to Holland. Many calumnious imputations having been insinuated by Sunderland and the Hanoverians, Townshend wrote a full and spirited justification of his own conduct, as well as that of Walpole, and detailed the real motives which had occasioned their disgrace, in a letter to his confidential friend, Slingelandt, afterwards pensionary of Holland;* who strongly expressed regret at his dismission, and concern at his refusal to accept the lord lieutenancy of Ireland. After recapitulating the imputations urged against him, he observes:

"These are all the reasons I have yet heard alleged for my disgrace. Lord Sunderland, indeed, did some time ago write me a letter in one of his frenzy fits, in which he lays down very extraordinary notions, and such doubts as

* Correspondence.

he will find very impracticable as far as they relate to this country upon the northern affairs; but I made him no answer to his letter; and having never been acquainted with the king's scheme as to those affairs, neither in whole nor in part, I suppose I am not punished for not acquiescing in what was never communicated to me. However, though these are the topics given out by my enemies, I am far from thinking they are the true and original causes of my disgrace. I believe the duchess of Munster, Mr. Bernstorff, and Mr. Robethon, could give a more exact and authentic account of the real causes that produced this event, if they thought it as much for their own service, as it might be for my credit to have the whole mystery of this alteration laid open."*

This letter had a very striking effect upon his friends in Holland. Pensionary Heinsius, Fagel, Slingelandt, Duvenvoirde, and other leading men in the republic, expressed the most serious concern at the fatal consequences which might result to the united interests of the two countries from this fatal division; and reprobated a measure, which, according to their opinion, was calculated to make the crown totter on the head of the king. The opinion of these men, warmly attached to the English interest, had great weight with George the First, during the short time which he passed at the Hague, on his return to England.

The terror of Sunderland and Stanhope on this

* Lord Townshend to M. Slingelandt, January $\frac{1}{12}$, 1716-7.

occasion, is fully proved by their extraordinary attention to Townshend and Walpole. Sunderland apologized for having accused them of caballing with the duke of Argyle; and acknowledged that the report had originated from a misrepresentation of Lord Cadogan, whose hasty temper was well known. He expressed his regret and repentance for having written an insolent letter to the earl of Orford,* in which he had insulted the cabinet ministers who adhered to Townshend. Both he and Stanhope vied in making the most artful excuses for their past conduct; declared that they did not in the smallest degree contribute to his disgrace, and threw the whole blame on the Hanoverians. They finally expatiated on the danger to the true Whig interest, if Townshend should now desert his tried friends. Stanhope wrote in the strongest manner to Walpole, and used every argument to appease his resentment. He renewed his asseverations, that the removal of the minister was the sole determination of his royal master, pronounced it impossible to persuade the king to recall his commands; expressed his apprehensions of the dangerous consequences, if Walpole and the other leaders of the Whigs should deem it necessary to resign; and repeated his earnest entreaties to prevent things from being carried to such extremities as he dreaded to think of. He exhorted Methuen, who declared his resolution of acting with Walpole,

* See letter from M. Duvenvoirde to Lord Townshend.—Correspondence.

not to desert the good cause, and throw the king into the hands of the Tories; but solicited his humble interposition with Townshend and Walpole: "They may possibly," he added, "unking their master, or (what I do before God think very possible) make him abdicate; but they will never force him to make Townshend secretary."* On their arrival in England, they acted in the same abject manner, and continued to make the most humble submission.

The king himself treated Townshend with the most flattering marks of distinction. He apologized in person for the precipitation with which he had deprived him of the seals, and acknowledged that he had been misled by false reports; he sent Bernsdorf to represent the fatal effects which would be derived from his opposition at this period. That artful minister offered him, in his master's name, a restoration to his former favour, and every satisfaction which he could desire; declared that the king having taken from him the seals, could not immediately restore them consistently with his own honour; promised that no other changes should be made; intreated him to accept the proffered dignity. He assured him that he might consider that office only as a temporary post, and be permitted to resign it at pleasure, in exchange for any other which he should prefer.†

As it was impossible, after the insolent letters of Sunderland, and the insidious conduct of

* Letter from Stanhope to Methuen.—Correspondence.

† Duvenvoirde to Lord Townshend.—Correspondence.

Stanhope, that Townshend could repose confidence in those who had thus insulted and deceived him, he would have acted a nobler and a wiser part, had he declined accepting any office. Had he persisted in his refusal of the lord lieutenancy, had Walpole, Devonshire, Orford, Cowper, Methuen, and Pulteney, instantly resigned on his dismission, the party of Sunderland was so weak and inefficient, that he could not have obtained a majority in parliament. But Townshend, mollified by the solicitations of the king, overcome by the importunities of his friends in Holland, and dreading the consequences of a disunion among the Whigs, when an invasion from Sweden was threatened, at length accepted the vice-royalty, and remaining in England, assisted at the deliberations of the cabinet. All the friends of Townshend were suffered to continue in their places. Methuen, who had acted as secretary of state during the absence of Stanhope, succeeded to the southern department. Walpole remained at the head of the treasury; and the great body of the Whigs still appeared to act with union and cordiality.

In consequence of this apparent amity, the opposition in the commons was so trifling, that the address, February 21, thanking the king for laying before the house the paper proving the projected invasion from Sweden, passed unanimously;* and when the estimates relating to the land forces were presented, March 4, the

* Journals.—Chandler.

motion for putting off the consideration was carried by a triumphant majority of 222 voices against 57.*

But the good understanding between the different members of administration, did not long continue. It soon appeared, that the king's promises of favour, made by Bernsdorff to Townshend and Walpole, were not fulfilled; and that he placed his chief confidence in Sunderland and Stanhope. New divisions took place; Townshend and Walpole continued to defend the measures of government; but their support was cold and formal, and so different from their former zeal, as plainly showed extreme dissatisfaction. Sunderland had now considerably increased his party, and thought himself sufficiently strong to defy opposition. In this situation, an open rupture in the cabinet was unavoidable. The first public symptoms of this difference appeared in the house of commons. On a motion that a supply be granted to enable the king to concert such measures with foreign princes and states, as may prevent any apprehensions from the designs of Sweden for the future, Walpole, who on all such occasions used to give a great bias to the house, maintained a profound silence, and the resolution was carried by a majority of only 4 voices, on the 9th of March.†

As it was evident that this mode of inimical proceeding originated from the party of which Townshend was leader, he received, on the same

* Chandler. † Journals.

evening, a letter from Stanhope, announcing his dismission.

"My Lord; *Cock-Pitt, April* 9, 1717.

"The king, judging it for his service to dispense with your lordship's service, as lord lieutenant of Ireland, I am commanded to signify his majesty's pleasure to your lordship upon it. His majesty is sorry that many circumstances render this alteration necessary at present; he commands me to assure your lordship, that he will never forget your past services; and you'l give me leave to say that I shall be very glad of an occasion of writing to your lordship upon a more agreeable subject, as being with great respect," &c.

The king himself highly appreciating the services and talents of Walpole, dreaded his resignation, but was persuaded to remove Townshend, under the belief that he would still remain at the head of the treasury. When Walpole, therefore, on the following morning, requested an audience, and gave up the seals, the king was extremely surprised. He refused to accept his resignation, expressed a high sense of his services in the kindest terms; declared his unwillingness to part with so faithful a counsellor; intreated him not to retire, and replaced the seals in his hat. To this Walpole replied, with no less concern than firmness, that however well inclined he might be to obey his majesty's commands, yet it would be impossible to serve

him faithfully with those ministers to whom he had lately given his favour. "They will propose to me," he said, "both as chancellor of the exchequer, and in parliament, such things, that if I agree to support them, my credit and reputation will be lost; and if I disapprove or oppose them, I must forfeit your majesty's favour. For I, in my station, though not the author, must be answerable to my king and to my country for all the measures which may be adopted by administration." At the conclusion of these words, he again laid the seals upon the table; the king returned them not less than ten times, and when the minister as often replaced them on the table, he gave up the struggle, and reluctantly accepted his resignation, expressing great concern and much resentment at his determined perseverance. At the conclusion of this affecting scene, Walpole came into the adjoining apartment, and those who were present, witnessed the anguish of his countenance, and observed that his eyes were suffused with tears. Those who immediately entered into the closet, found the king no less disturbed and agitated.*

These removals were soon followed by an almost total change in the administration. Devonshire, Orford, Methuen, and Pulteney, resigned; Stanhope was appointed first lord of the treasury, and chancellor of the exchequer; Sunderland and Addison secretaries of state;

* This interesting anecdote is taken from a letter of Horace Walpole to Etough, dated Wolterton, October 12, 1751. See Correspondence.

the duke of Bolton lord lieutenant of Ireland, and the duke of Newcastle lord chamberlain; the earl of Berkeley was constituted first lord of the admiralty, and the duke of Kingston retained the office of privy seal, to which he had been nominated in the preceding year, on the resignation of Sunderland, who was made treasurer of Ireland for life.

CHAPTER 17.

1717—1719.

Walpole proposes his Plan for reducing the Interest of the National Debt—His resignation, excites warm Debates—Altercation with Stanhope—Remarks on the baneful Spirit of a systematic Opposition to all the Measures of Government—Walpole not exempted from that Censure—His uniform Opposition, and Influence in the House of Commons.

THE resignation of Walpole happened at a time when he was exerting his abilities for finance, in the arrangement of a scheme highly advantageous to the country. When he was first placed at the head of the treasury, the national debt amounted to 50 millions, and although the common interest of money had been reduced in the late reign to 5 per cent. yet the interest of some of the debts was as high as 8, and none lower than 6; so that the average was 7 per cent. The difference between this rate of interest, and that on private mortgages, presented a *real* fund for lessening the public debt.

This debt was considered under two heads; redeemable, and irredeemable. The redeemable, or such debts as had been provided for by parliament with a redeemable interest of so much per cent. the public had a right and power to dis-

charge, either by providing money for such proprietors as insisted upon money, or by offering new terms, in discharge of all former conditions, which, if accepted by the proprietors, was to be deemed an actual redemption of the first debt, as if it had been paid off in ready money. As to the irredeemable debts, of long and short annuities, nothing could be effected without the absolute consent of the proprietors. The only method, therefore, to treat with them, was to offer such conditions as they should deem advantageous.*

Upon these principles Walpole gave the first hint of this great scheme, by proposing to borrow £.600,000, bearing only 4 per cent. interest, and to apply all savings, arising from the intended redemptions, for the purpose of reducing and discharging the national debt, which was the first resolution ever taken in parliament in order to raise or establish a *general* sinking fund.† When he brought his scheme into the house, March, 23, 1717, the project appeared so well digested and advantageous, that the opposition which had been intended was converted into approbation, and every article was agreed to on the 10th of April.

The difficulties which he had to encounter in the execution of this scheme, will appear from the consideration, that no reduction of interest could be made without the consent of the public

* Tindal, vol. 19, p. 102.

† Historical Register, for 1717, p. 150.—Some Considerations concerning the Public Funds, 1735, p. 11.

creditors themselves. It was solely by his address and management, that the companies of the Bank and South Sea agreed not only to reduce their own interest, but to furnish large sums for the discharge of such proprietors of the redeemables as should refuse to comply with an equal reduction; a striking proof of the general esteem in which he was held by the proprietors of the national debts; of their regard for his judgment and confidence in his equity. Unfortunately for the completion of this great arrangement, the able projector was no longer in office. On bringing in the bill, Walpole gave a hint that he had resigned his places, by saying, "I now present it as a country gentleman, but I hope it will not fare the worse for having two fathers, and that my successor will take care to bring it to perfection."*

The resignation of Walpole caused a great sensation in the house of commons, where regret for the want of his talents for finance seemed to prevail, and he was as much inveighed against for resigning, as he was afterwards reviled for remaining in power. His withdrawing from government at this crisis, was called a defection; a criminal conspiracy, with a view to embarrass the king, and to force him to comply with his unwarrantable demands. In answer to these accusations, Walpole justly observed, "persons who had accepted places in the government, had often been reproached for carrying on designs and acting contrary to the interest of their

* Chandler.

country; but I have never heard a man arraigned for laying down one of the most profitable places in the kingdom: for my own part, if I would have complied with some measures, it had not been in the power of the present ministers to remove me; but I have reasons for resigning my employments, with which I acquainted his majesty, and may, perhaps, in a proper time, declare them to the house. In the mean while, the tenour of my conduct shall show, that I do not intend to make the king uneasy, or to embarrass his affairs."*

But a more serious charge was brought against him by Stanhope, who observed, in the heat of debate, "I will endeavour to make up by application, honesty, and disinterestedness, what I want in abilities and experience. I will content myself with the salary and lawful perquisites of my office; and, though I have quitted a better place, I will not quarter myself upon any body. I have no brothers, nor other relations to provide for; and upon my first entering into the treasury, I made a standing order against the late practice of granting reversions of places." Walpole, touched with these insinuations, complained in the first place of breach of friendship, and betraying private conversation. He then frankly owned, that while he was in employment, he had endeavoured to serve his friends and relations; than which, in his opinion, nothing was more reasonable and just. "As to

* Chandler.

the granting of reversions," he added, "I am willing to acquaint the house with the meaning of the charge which is now urged against me. I have no objections to the German ministers, whom the king brought from Hanover, and who, as far as I had observed, behaved themselves like men of honour; but, there is a mean fellow,* of what nation I know not, who is eager to dispose of employments. This man, having obtained the grant of a reversion, which he designed for his son, I thought it too good for him, and therefore reserved it for my own son. On this disappointment, the foreigner impertinently demanded £. 2,500, under pretence that he had been offered that sum for the reversion; but I was wiser than to comply with his demands. And I am bold to acknowledge, one of the chief reasons that made me resign, was, because I could not connive at some things that were carrying on."†

When Walpole asserted in the house, that he never intended to embarrass the affairs of government, he either was not sincere in his professions, or did not possess that patriotic and disinterested firmness which could resist the spirit of party; for almost from the moment of his resignation, to his return into office, we find him uniform in his opposition to all the measures of government. We see him leagued with the Tories, and voting with Sir William Wyndham, Bromley, Shippen, and Snell; we observe, not

* Alluding to Robethon. † Chandler.

without regret at the inconsistency of human nature, Shippen expressing his satisfaction, that Walpole, when contending for the service of his country, was no more afraid than himself of being called a Jacobite, by those who wanted other arguments to support their debates.* We find him even opposing the mutiny bill, that necessary measure for the regulation of military discipline, and in the heat of argument, making use of this memorable expression, "He that is for blood, shall have blood:" But though he spoke thus strenuously against the bill, he voted for it, and secured a large majority. Being reproached for his apparent inconsistency, he justified himself by declaring, that, although in the debate he was of opinion that mutiny and desertion should be punished by the civil magistrate; yet he was convinced that those crimes should be punished by the martial law, rather than escape with impunity.† We find him taking an active part against the repeal of the occasional and schism bills, notwithstanding his animated declaration, on a former occasion, that the schism bill had more the appearance of a decree made by Julian the apostate, than a law enacted by a protestant parliament, since it tended to raise as great a persecution against our protestant brethren, as either the primitive christians ever suffered from the heathen emperors, or the protestants from popery and the inquisition.‡ In support of the question for reducing

* Chandler, vol. 6. p. 156. † Hardwicke Papers.

‡ Chandler, 1712.—Tindal.

the troops, he afforded a striking instance of inconsistency, by enlarging on the danger of a standing army in a free nation, and by insisting that 12,000 men were fully sufficient. Yet at this very period, a rebellious spirit continued to subsist in England, and prevailed still more in Scotland. Although the king of Sweden's design to support the Pretender had been discovered; yet he still persisted in his resolution, and waited only for a favourable opportunity of carrying his project into execution. The queen of Spain, and cardinal *Alberoni*, had revived war in the south of Europe, and were forming vast preparations; and the reception and encouragement given to the adherents of the Pretender, were sure symptoms of their inclinations in his favour. Walpole was well aware of all these circumstances, and could not be ignorant that the reduction of the army must have been attended with fatal consequences, and therefore his support of this measure could be occasioned only by party resentment.

We find him, who had spoken with such heat and force of argument against the makers of the peace of Utrecht, who had been the indefatigable chairman of the secret committee, and had drawn up that able report, which brought such heavy accusations against Oxford, now grown languid and lukewarm in the prosecution, absenting* himself from the committee so often, that another chairman was chosen in his stead, and ironically complimented by Shippen, that

* Tindal.

he who was the most forward and active in the impeachment, had abated in his warmth since he was out of place.* At length, a feigned quarrel as to the mode of proceeding arose between the two houses, and no prosecutors appearing on the day fixed for the continuance of the trial, Oxford was unanimously acquitted.

Walpole also, and the Whigs in opposition, whom Shippen humorously called his *new allies*, zealously supported the inquiry into the conduct of lord Cadogan, instituted June 4th, for fraud in the charge of transporting the Dutch troops, at the time of the rebellion, to and from Great Britain. Walpole spoke in this debate near two hours, and in the course of his speech, strained his voice so high, and used such violent efforts, that the blood burst from his nose, and he was obliged to retire from the house.† In answer to his arguments, it was ably observed by Lechmere, that the inquiry was frivolous, the result of party malice, and of the same nature with those which had been instituted against Marlborough, Townshend, and Walpole himself; and he justly observed, that those persons who were now most zealous about the inquiry, had been silent about these pretended frauds while they continued in place. But the advocates for the inquiry were so powerful, that it was negatived only by a majority of 10 voices.‡

Whatever were the motives by which Walpole

* Chandler. † Ibid.

‡ Historical Register.—Chandler.

was guided, he considerably influenced the house of commons, during the whole time of his opposition. Three days after his resignation, Stanhope having moved for granting the sum of £.250,000 to enable the king to concert measures against Sweden; and Pulteney, who had just resigned his place of secretary at war, having inveighed with great vehemence against a German ministry, the motion was in great danger of being lost, till Walpole closed the debate, by observing, "That having already spoken in favour of the supply, he should now vote for it;" and the motion, in consequence of his interference, was carried without a division.* A few words in favour of Mr. Jackson, who had offended the house by declaring that there were amongst them a set of men who made it their study and business to embarrass the government, saved him from the Tower. And when Shippen said, "the speech from the throne seemed rather calculated for the meridian of Germany, than of Great Britain," and urged, as the only infelicity of his majesty's reign, that he was unacquainted with our language and constitution; a few palliating expressions from Walpole would have been attended with the same effect, if the inflexible orator had not maintained what he had advanced, and by that obstinacy occasioned his own commitment.† Even in the article of supplies, he occasionally prevailed against the ministry. In speaking for the diminution of the army

* Historical Register.—Chandler.—Tindal.

† Chandler, vol. 6. p. 157.

estimates, his proposal, that £. 650,000, instead of £. 681,618, should be granted for defraying the charges of guards and garrisons, * was adopted; and in the same session, when the ministry demanded £. 130,361, for the pay of reduced officers, and the Tories would only grant £. 80,000, Walpole proposed a medium of £. 99,000; and his motion was carried without a division.

A proposal from the South Sea company, for advancing £. 700,000, having been accepted by the house, some of the members were for applying it towards the present and growing necessities of the government. But in a grand committee of ways and means, Jan. 12, 1719, Walpole, in favour of his sinking fund, insisting that the public debts already incurred should be first considered, a resolution was taken, and a bill afterwards brought in, directing the application of this money, agreeably to his sentiments. "It is indeed plain," adds a virulent pamphleteer, who decried the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, that "in all transactions of money affairs, the house relied more upon his judgment than on that of any other member."†

Thus it appears that Walpole, even when in opposition, almost managed the house of commons; and being in opposition he could not gain that ascendancy, by the means of corruption and influence, which were afterwards so repeatedly urged against him, and which the

* Chandler, vol. 6. p. 175.

† History of the Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, p. 113.

same virulent author calls "some SECRET MAGIC *of which he seemed to have been a perfect master.*" In fact, the magic which he applied, was derived from profound knowledge of finance, great skill in debate, in which perspicuity and sound sense were eminently conspicuous, unimpeached integrity of character, and the assistance of party.

Walpole was no less vehement in his opposition to those measures of government which related to foreign affairs, and which, at this time, embraced a very large field for approbation or censure. The fatal consequences of the peace of Utrecht, placed England in a very delicate situation between the opposite pretensions of Spain and Austria. To satisfy both was impracticable; but the alliance with France, concerted by Walpole and Townshend, and the necessity of opposing the unjust schemes and dangerous intrigues of cardinal Alberoni, compelled Great Britain to side with the Emperor. Yet though it was generally known that Spain, in concert with Sweden, meditated a descent on our coasts, to overturn the established government, and set the Pretender on the throne; though Philip the Fifth grasped at the possession of Gibraltar and Minorca, and was labouring for the subversion of the regent's power in France; and the ambition of his consort, Elizabeth Farnese, aimed at the acquisition of the Italian provinces for her son; though a Spanish fleet had been sent into the Mediterranean, and a Spanish army had overrun the kingdom of Sardinia, and threatened the reduction of Sicily, no attempt seems to have

been wanting on the side of England, to induce the king of Spain, by persuasion, to adopt pacific measures. Immediate preparations were arranged with the Emperor, France, and the United Provinces, and every proper measure was concerted with those powers to prevent hostilities. Cadogan was sent to the Hague, du Bois came to London, and settled with the ministry terms for an accommodation between the Emperor and the king of Spain.* George the First even proposed the cession of Gibraltar,† on the consideration of an equivalent, and permitted the regent duke of Orleans to make the offer to the king of Spain, if he would ratify the terms specified in the treaty, called the quadruple alliance, which was passed at London on the 2nd of August 1718, between the Emperor, England, and France, and afterwards acceded to by the United Provinces.

By this alliance, the Emperor renounced all claims to the crown of Spain, consented, that Tuscany, Parma, and Placencia, as male fiefs of the empire, should descend, in default of male heirs, to Don Carlos, eldest son of Elizabeth Farnese, by Philip the Fifth. In return for these concessions, the Emperor was to be gratified with the possession of Sicily, in lieu of which territory, Sardinia was to be allotted to Victor Amadeus. The terms to be imposed on Philip were, the renunciation of all claims to the dominions of the Emperor, in Italy, and the

* Tindal, vol. 19. p. 167.

† See Chapter on Gibraltar, in Period IV.

Netherlands. Three months being allowed to Philip for the acceptance of these conditions, Stanhope himself employed this interval in conducting the negociation in person. He repaired to Paris, and after adjusting measures with the regent proceeded to Madrid. In a conference with Alberoni, he represented that a French army was preparing to invade Spain, and that a British squadron, under the command of admiral Byng, was sailing for the Mediterranean, with orders to attack and destroy the Spanish fleet, if Sicily was not evacuated: he even gave a list of the number and force of the ships, to convince him of their evident superiority.* These overtures were rejected with haughtiness and even contempt. The departure of Stanhope from Spain became the signal for war; the French troops advanced, admiral Byng attacked, captured, and destroyed the greater part of the Spanish fleet. The king of Spain, disappointed in his hopes of making an impression on England, by the death of Charles the Twelfth, and the defection of the Czar, was compelled to dismiss Alberoni, and to accede to the quadruple alliance.

During the whole progress of these transactions, Walpole strenuously opposed the conduct of government. On the motion, made by Sir William Strickland, March 17, 1718, for an address of thanks to the king for his unwearied endeavours to promote the welfare of his kingdoms, and to preserve the tranquillity of Europe,

* Earl Stanhope's Letter to Secretary Craggs; Hardwicke Papers.

and to assure him that the house would make good such exceedings of men for the sea service, for the year 1718, as his majesty should find necessary,* Walpole observed, that such an address had all the air of a declaration of war against Spain. In the following sessions, when secretary Craggs laid before the house, on the 11th of November, copies of treaties relating to the quadruple alliance, alluded to in the speech from the throne, Walpole no less warmly objected to the words in the motion for an address, expressing the entire satisfaction of the house in those measures which the king had already taken; he urged, "It was against the common rules of prudence, and the methods of proceeding in that house, to approve a thing before they knew what it was: "I am," he added, "thoroughly convinced of, and as ready as any person in that assembly, to acknowledge his majesty's great care for the general peace of Europe, and the interest Great Britain; but to sanction, in the manner proposed, the late measures, can have no other view than to screen ministers, who are conscious of having done something amiss, and who having begun a war against Spain, would now make it the parliament's war:" He concluded, by expressing an entire dissatisfaction at a conduct contrary to the law of nations, and a breach of solemn treaties."† When Craggs, in reply, gave an abstract of the articles of the quadruple alliance, Walpole, after reiterating his professions of duty and affection to the king, distinguished

* Chandler. † Ibid.

between his majesty and his ministers, and expressed his unwillingness to approve the measures pursued, until the treaties on which those measures were founded had been fully and maturely examined.* Craggs having presented the translations of the remaining treaties, and the king having sent a message, December 17th, that he had declared war against Spain, Walpole combated the address, and while his brother Horace made a long speech against the quadruple alliance, and particularly argued that the grant of Sicily to the Emperor in exchange for Sardinia, was a breach of the treaty of Utrecht, he himself exclaimed against the injustice of attacking the Spanish fleet before the declaration of war.† But the answer given to this violent declamation by the ministerial advocates, was not unreasonable. They stated, that the blame could attach only to Spain; the conduct of the king and ministers was agreeable to the law of nations, and to the rules of equity. Was it just to attack Sardinia, without any previous declaration of war, and while the Emperor was engaged with the Turks? Was it just to invade Sicily, without the least provocation? And was it not just in the king of England to vindicate the faith of treaties, and to protect the trade of his subjects, which had been violently oppressed? But though Walpole might in this, and other instances, appear influenced by the spirit of party; yet the arguments which he and his friends urged against the articles of the quadruple alliance, are proved

* Chandler. † Ibid. vol. 6. p. 191.

by experience to have been well founded. For although the accession of Spain seemed to complete the peace of Utrecht, since the Emperor acknowledged Philip king of Spain, and Philip renounced all claims to the Netherlands, the Milanese, Naples, and Sicily; yet those two princes were too much irritated to enter cordially into this scheme of pacification. Both parties had made cessions without relinquishing their respective pretensions, and it will be difficult to decide, whether the Emperor or Philip were most dissatisfied with the quadruple alliance.

CHAPTER 18.

1719.

Origin and Progress of the Peerage Bill—Opposition and Speech of Walpole—Bill rejected.

IN opposition to the peerage bill, Walpole employed all his talents and eloquence, and bore the most conspicuous part in its defeat.

This bill was projected by Sunderland. His views were, to restrain the power of the prince of Wales, when he came to the throne, whom he had offended beyond all hopes of forgiveness, and to extend and perpetuate his own influence, by the creation of many new peers. The unfortunate misunderstanding between the king and his son, which had recently increased to a very alarming degree, favoured the success of his scheme; and the king, from a motive of mean jealousy, was induced to give up this important and honourable branch of his royal prerogative, and to strip the crown of its brightest jewel. Sunderland had little difficulty in acquiring a large majority in the house of lords, in favour of a measure which increased their consequence; the peers of Scotland in the upper house were gained by the promise of an hereditary seat, and

many of the lords, who from form opposed the bill, were secretly not averse to its passing. Being secure of the lords, he relied for success in the house of commons, on the known abhorrence of the Whigs, who formed a large majority, to the creation of the twelve peers, during the administration of Oxford; he had been witness to their repeated and vehement asseverations, that the crown ought in future to be deprived of a prerogative which by that act had brought dishonour on Great Britain, and endangered the liberties of Europe. Even the Whigs in opposition, as he thought, could not venture to obstruct a bill of such a nature, without losing the confidence of their party. In these circumstances, a bill to limit the number of peers was proposed.

The king sent a message to the house, that, "he had much at heart the settling the peerage of the whole kingdom on such a foundation as might secure the freedom and constitution of parliament in all future ages, and he was willing his prerogative should not stand in the way of so great and necessary a work."* In consequence of this message, a bill was brought in "to settle and limit the peerage in such a manner, that the number of English peers should not be enlarged beyond six of the present number, which, upon failure of issue male, might be supplied by new creations: that, instead of the sixteen elective peers from Scotland, twenty-five should be made hereditary on the part of

* Journals of the House of Lords.—Chandler

that kingdom; and that this number, upon failure of heirs male, should be supplied from the other members of the Scotch peerage."* After a strenuous opposition from Cowper, and some partial objections from Townshend and Nottingham, the bill was twice read, and the articles agreed to without division; but on the day appointed for a third reading, Stanhope observed, "That the bill having made a great noise, and raised strange apprehensions; and since the design of it had been so misrepresented, and so misunderstood, that it was like to meet with great opposition in the other house, he thought it advisable to let that matter lie still till a more proper opportunity."†

The unpopularity of the measure, and the ferment it had excited in the nation, were the motives which induced Sunderland to withdraw the motion at the moment of certain success in the house of lords. In vain the pen of Addison had been employed in defending the bill, in a paper called, *The Old Whig*, against Steele, who attacked it in a pamphlet intituled *The Plebeian*; and whose arguments had greater weight with the public. Walpole also published a pamphlet on the same side of the question, "*The Thoughts of a Member of the lower House, in relation to a Project for restraining and limiting the Power of the Crown in the future Creation of Peers.*"‡ In this publication, he explained the nature of the bill, and exposed the views of those who intro-

* Lords' Journals. † Ibid.

‡ Royal and Noble Authors, vol. 2. p. 140.

duced it, with a perspicuity of argument, and simplicity of style adapted to all capacities, and calculated to make a general impression.

The minister, however, did not relinquish his darling bill. During the interval between the prorogation and meeting of parliament, he exerted every effort to engage a majority in its favour. Bribes were profusely lavished, promises and threats were alternately employed. He affected to declare, that it was the king's desire, and not the act of the ministry; he did not attempt to conceal that it was levelled against the future government of the prince of Wales, whom he represented as capable of *doing mad things* when he came to the throne.* He declared that the necessary consequence of its rejection would be the ruin of the Whigs, and the introduction of the Tories into the confidence and favour of the king; he expressed his surprise that any person who styled himself a Whig should oppose it; and exerted himself in the business with so much heat and violence, that in endeavouring to persuade Middleton, lord chancellor of Ireland who refused to support the measure in the British house of commons, the blood gushed from his nose.†

These efforts were attended with such success, that at a meeting held by the leaders of the Whigs in opposition, at Devonshire house,

* Lord Middleton's conversation with lord Sunderland. Correspondence, Period II.

† See Lord Middleton's Letters and Minutes. Correspondence. Period II.

Walpole found the whole body lukewarm, irresolute, or desponding. Several of the peers secretly favoured a bill which would increase their importance; others declared, that as Whigs, it would be a manifest inconsistency to oppose a measure tending to prevent the repetition of an abuse of prerogative against which they had repeatedly inveighed—those who were sincerely averse to it, were unwilling to exert themselves in hopeless resistance, and it was the prevailing opinion that the bill should be permitted to pass without opposition. Walpole alone dissented, and reprobated, in the strongest terms, this resolution as dastardly and impolitic. He maintained that it was the only point on which they could harass administration with any prospect of success; that he would place it in such a light as to excite indignation in every independent commoner; that he saw a spirit rising against it among the Whigs, and particularly among the country gentlemen, who were otherwise not averse to support government. He said, that he had overheard a member of the house of commons, a country gentleman who possessed an estate of not more than £.800 a year, declare to another with great warmth, that although he had no chance of being made a peer himself; yet, he would never consent to the injustice of giving a perpetual exclusion to his family. He was convinced, he added, that the same sentiment would have a strong effect upon the whole body of country gentlemen; and concluded his animated remonstrances, by declaring, "if

deserted by my party, I myself will singly stand forth and oppose it." This declaration, urged with uncommon vehemence, occasioned much altercation, and many persuasions were made to deter him from adopting a measure which appeared chimerical and absurd; but when he persisted, the whole party gradually came over to his opinion, and agreed that an opposition should be made to it in the house of commons.*

The bill was again introduced to the notice of parliament, at the opening of the session, by the following artful expressions in the king's speech: "If the necessities of my government "have sometimes engaged your duty and affec- "tion to intrust me with powers, of which you "have always with good reason, been jealous, "the whole world must acknowledge they have "been so used, as to justify the confidence "you have reposed in me. And as I can "truly affirm, that no prince was ever more "zealous to increase his own authority, than I am "to perpetuate the liberty of my people, I hope "you will think of all proper methods to esta- "blish and transmit to your posterity, the freedom "of our happy constitution, and particularly to "secure that part which is most liable to abuse. "I value myself upon being the first, who hath "given you an opportunity of doing it; and I "must recommend it to you to compleat those

* See Speaker Onslow's Remarks on Opposition. Correspondence.

"measures, which remained imperfect the last "session."*

The speech was made on the 23d of November; on the 25th, the duke of Buckingham brought the bill into the house, where it was opposed by lord Cowper only. It was committed on the 26th, ingrossed on the 28th, passed the 30th, and sent down to the house of commons on the 1st of December.† At this period the bill had undergone no alteration from that proposed in the last session; but it was understood, that to conciliate the commons, the king was willing to give up another branch of his prerogative, that of pardoning in cases of impeachment, and the lords would wave their privilege of *scandalum magnatum*.‡

This memorable bill was read a second time on the 8th of December,§ and a motion made for committing it, gave rise to a long and warm debate. It was principally supported by Craggs, secretary of state, Aislabie, chancellor of the exchequer, Lechmere, attorney-general, and Hampden; it was opposed by Sir Richard

* Journals.—Chandler. † Ibid.

‡ Words spoken in derogation of a peer, a judge, or other great officer of the realm, are called *scandalum magnatum*, and, though they be such as would not be actionable in the case of a common person, yet when spoken in disgrace of such high and respectable characters, they amount to an atrocious injury, which is redressed by an action on the case, founded on many ancient statutes; as well on behalf of the crown to inflict the punishment of imprisonment on the slanderer, as on behalf of the party to recover damages for the injury sustained.—Blackstone's Commentaries. B. 3. C. 8.

§ See Journals.—Chandler, by mistake, says the 7th.

Steele in a very masterly speech, by Smith, Sir John Packington, Methuen, and Walpole.

On this occasion he forsook his usual mode of debating, which was seldom decorated with metaphorical ornaments, and, with great animation, began his speech by introducing this classical allusion:

"Among the Romans, the temple of fame was placed behind the temple of virtue, to denote that there was no approach to the temple of fame, but through that of virtue. But if this bill is passed into a law, one of the most powerful incentives to virtue will be taken away, since there will be no arriving at honour, but through the winding-sheet of an old decrepit lord, or the grave of an extinct noble family: a policy very different from that glorious and enlightened nation, who made it their pride to hold out to the world, illustrious examples of merited elevation.

Patere honoris scirent ut cuncti viam.

"It is very far from my thoughts to depreciate the advantages, or detract from the respect due to illustrious birth; for though the philosopher may say with the poet,

Et genus et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco;

yet the claim derived from that advantage, though fortuitous, is so generally and so justly conceded, that every endeavour to subvert the principle, would merit contempt and abhorrence. But though illustrious birth forms one undis-

puted title to pre-eminence, and superior consideration, yet surely it ought not to be the only one. The origin of high titles was derived from the will of the sovereign to reward signal services, or conspicuous merit, by a recompence which, surviving to posterity, should display in all ages the virtues of the receiver, and the gratitude of the donor. Is merit then so rarely discernible, or is gratitude so small a virtue in our days, that the one must be supposed to be its own reward, and the other limited to a barren display of impotent good-will? Had this bill originated with some noble peer of distinguished ancestry, it would have excited less surprise; a desire to exclude others from a participation of honours, is no novelty in persons of that class: *Quod ex aliorum meritis sibi arrogant; id mihi ex meis ascribi nolunt.*

"But it is matter of just surprise, that a bill of this nature should either have been projected, or at least promoted by a gentleman* who was, not long ago, seated amongst us, and being admitted into the house of peers, is now desirous to shut the door after him.

"When great alterations in the constitution are to be made, the experiment should be tried for a short time before the proposed change is finally carried into execution, lest it should produce evil instead of good. But in this case, when the bill is once sanctioned by parliament, there can be no future hopes of redress, because the upper house will always oppose the repeal of

* Lord Stanhope.

an act, which has so considerably increased their power. The great unanimity with which this bill has passed the lords, ought to inspire some jealousy in the commons; for whatever the lords gain, must be acquired at the loss of the commons, and the diminution of the regal prerogative; and in all disputes between the lords and commons, when the upper house is immutable, the lower must sooner or later, be obliged to recede.

"The view of the ministry in framing this bill, is plainly nothing but to secure their power in the house of lords. The principal argument on which its necessity is founded, is drawn from the mischief occasioned by the creation of twelve peers during the reign of queen Anne, for the purpose of carrying an infamous peace through the house of lords; but that was only a temporary measure, whereas the mischief to be occasioned by this bill, will be perpetual. It creates thirty-one peers by authority of parliament; and so extraordinary a step cannot be supposed to be taken without some sinister design in future. The ministry want no additional strength in the house of lords, for conducting the common affairs of government, as is sufficiently proved by the unanimity with which they have carried through this bill. If, therefore, they think it necessary to acquire additional strength, it must be done with views and intentions more extravagant and hostile to the constitution, than any which have yet been attempted. The bill itself is of a most insidious and artful nature. The immediate creation of

nine Scotch peers, and the reservation of six English peers for a necessary occasion, is of double use; to be ready for the house of lords if wanted, and to engage three times the number in the house of commons by hopes and promises.

"To sanction this attempt, the king is induced to affect to waive some part of his prerogative; but this is merely an ostensible renunciation, unfounded in fact or reason. I am desirous to treat of all points relating to the private affairs of his majesty, with the utmost tenderness and caution, but I should wish to ask the house, and I think I can anticipate the answer; Has any question been upon the tapis, such as no man would forgive the authors, that should put them under the necessity of voting against either side?* Are there any misfortunes, which every honest man secretly laments and bewails, and would think the last of mischiefs, should they ever become the subject of public and parliamentary conversations? Cannot numbers that hear me testify, from the solicitations and whispers they have met with, that there are men ready and determined to attempt these things if they had a prospect of success? If they have thought, but I hope they are mistaken in their opinion of this house, that the chief obstacle would arise in the house of lords, where they have always been tender upon personal points, especially to any of their own body, does not this project

* He here probably alluded to the misunderstanding between the king and prince of Wales.

enable them to carry any question through that house? Must not the twenty-five peers of Scotland accept upon any terms, or be for ever excluded? Or will not twenty-five be found in all Scotland that will? How great will the temptation be likewise to six English, to fill the present vacancies? And shall we then, with our eyes open, take this step, which I cannot but consider as the beginning of woe and confusion; and shall we, under these apprehensions, break through the Union, and shut up the door of honour? It certainly will have that effect; nay, the very argument advanced in its support, that it will add weight to the commons, by keeping the rich men there, admits that it will be an exclusion.

"But we are told that his majesty has voluntarily consented to this limitation of his prerogative. It may be true: but may not the king have been deceived? Which, if it is ever to be supposed, must be admitted in this case. It is incontrovertible, that kings have been over-ruled by the importunity of their ministers to remove, or to take into administration, persons who are disagreeable to them. The character of the king furnishes us also a strong proof that he has been deceived; for although in Hanover, where he possesses absolute power, he never tyrannised over his subjects, or despotically exercised his authority; yet, can one instance be produced when he ever gave up a prerogative?

"If the constitution is to be amended in the house of lords, the greatest abuses ought to be

first corrected. But what is the abuse, against which this bill so vehemently inveighs, and which it is intended to correct? The abuse of the prerogative in creating an occasional number of peers, is a prejudice only to the lords, it can rarely be a prejudice to the commons, but must generally be exercised in their favour; and should it be argued, that in case of a difference between the two houses, the king may exercise that branch of his prerogative, with a view to force the commons to recede, we may reply, that upon a difference with the commons, the king possesses his negative, and the exercise of that negative would be less culpable than making peers to screen himself.

"The strongest argument, however, against the bill is, that it will not only be a discouragement to virtue and merit, but would endanger our excellent constitution; for as there is a due balance between the three branches of the legislature, it will destroy that balance, and consequently subvert the whole constitution, by causing one of the three powers, which are now dependent on each other, to preponderate in the scale. The crown is dependent upon the commons by the power of granting money; the commons are dependent on the crown by the power of dissolution. The lords will now be made independent of both.

"The sixteen elective peers of Scotland, already admit themselves to be a dead court weight; yet the same sixteen are now to be made hereditary, and nine added to their number.

These twenty-five, under the influence of corrupt ministers, may find their account in betraying their trust; the majority of the lords may also find their account in supporting such ministers; but the commons and the commons only, must suffer for all, and be deprived of every advantage. If the proposed measure destroys two negatives in the crown, it gives a negative to these twenty-five united, and confers a power, superior to that of the king himself, on the head of a clan, who will have the power of recommending many. The Scottish commoners can have no other view in supporting this measure, but the expected aggrandizement of their own chiefs. It will dissolve the allegiance of the Scottish peers who are not amongst the twenty-five, and who can never hope for the benefit of an election to be peers of parliament, and almost exact obedience from the sovereign to the betrayers of the constitution.

"The present view of the bill is dangerous; the view to posterity, personal and unpardonable. It will make the lords masters of the king, according to their own confession, when they admit, that a change of administration renders a new creation of peers necessary; for by precluding the king from making peers in future, it at the same time precludes him from changing the present administration, who will naturally fill the vacancies with their own creatures; and the new peers will adhere to the first minister, with the same zeal and unanimity as those created by lord Oxford adhered to him.

"If when the parliament was made septennial,

the power of dissolving it before the end of seven years had been wrested from the crown, would not such an alteration have added immense authority to the commons? And yet the prerogative of the crown in dissolving parliaments, may be, and has been oftener abused, than the power of creating peers.

"But it may be observed, that the king, for his own sake, will rarely make a great number of peers, for they being usually created by the influence of the first minister, soon become, upon a change of administration, a weight against the crown; and had queen Anne lived, the truth of this observation would have been verified in the case of most of the twelve peers made by lord Oxford. Let me ask, however, is the abuse of any prerogative a sufficient reason for annihilating that prerogative? Under that consideration, the power of dissolving parliaments ought to be taken away, because that power has been more exercised, and more abused than any of the other prerogatives; yet in 1641, when the king assented to a law that disabled him from proroguing or dissolving parliament, without the consent of both houses, he was from that time under subjection to the parliament, and from thence followed all the subsequent mischiefs, and his own destruction. It may also be asked, Whether the prerogative of making peace and war has never been abused? I might here call to your recollection the peace of Utrecht, and the present war with Spain. Yet who will presume to advise that the power of making

war and peace, should be taken from the crown?

"How can the lords expect the commons to give their concurrence to a bill by which they and their posterity are to be for ever excluded from the peerage? How would they themselves receive a bill which should prevent a baron from being made a viscount, a viscount an earl, an earl a marquis, and a marquis a duke? Would they consent to limit the number of any rank of peerage? Certainly none; unless, perhaps, the dukes. If the pretence for this measure is, that it will tend to secure the freedom of parliament, I say there are many other steps more important and less equivocal, such as the discontinuance of bribes and pensions.

"That this bill will secure the liberty of parliament, I totally deny. It will secure a great preponderance to the peers; it will form them into a compact impenetrable phalanx, by giving them the power to exclude, in all cases of extinction and creation, all such persons from their body, as may be obnoxious to them. In the instances we have seen of their judgment in some late cases, sufficient marks of partiality may be found to put us on our guard against committing to them the power they would derive from this bill, of judging the right of latent or dormant titles, when their verdict would be of such immense importance. If gentlemen will not be convinced by argument, at least, let them not shut their ears to the dreadful example of former times; let them recollect

that the overweening disposition of the great barons, to aggrandize their own dignity, occasioned them to exclude the lesser barons, and to that circumstance may be fairly attributed the sanguinary wars which so long desolated the country."*

The effect of this speech on the house, exceeded the most sanguine expectation; it fixed those who had before been wavering and irresolute, brought over many who had been tempted by the speciousness of the measure to favour its introduction, and procured its rejection by a triumphant majority of 269 against 177.

The fate of this bill showed the weakness of the ministry, and their want of influence in parliament. Nor were they able to compensate for their want of power at home by waiting for their support, the suffrages of the Hanoverian ministers, which were necessary to support their credit with the king. They were at this time involved in a serious misunderstanding with count Bernsdorf, whose age and experience in the politics of Germany gave him considerable influence over the mind of the king. He had conceived a project to embroil his master with Prussia, in order to form a combination in Germany for the purpose of despoiling the House of Brandenburgh of some of its territories, part of which were to be appropriated by Austria and

* The substance of this speech is collected from memoranda in Sir Robert Walpole's own hand-writing, among lord Orford's Papers.—See also, Onslow on Opposition, Correspondence, Period II.—Historical Register, 1719.—Chandler,

part by Hanover. He himself hoped in the intended dismemberments to obtain some lordships which were contiguous to his own estates. This scheme was opposed by the British ministry as equally unjust and impolitic; and they successfully employed the intervention of the duchess of Kendal to work on the mind of the king, and induced him to withdraw his assent. This collision naturally occasioned a scheme in the German junta, and occasioned a temporary diminution of the interest of the British ministry; and their anxiety to conciliate these obscure, but powerful favourites, was one of the motives which induced them to countenance the wild project called the South Sea scheme, now in agitation.*

* See two Letters from lord Stanhope to lord Sunderland, Appendix.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX TO VOL. I.

CONTAINING

SELECT PARTS

OF THE

CORRESPONDENCE

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE FIRST EDITION.

ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE.

1708—1719.

1708.

*This Correspondence between Walpole, while he was secretary at war, and the duke of Marlborough, is preserved among the Walpole Papers at Wolterton. The letters from the duke of Marlborough are all originals, and written with his own hand. Those from Walpole are draughts, most of them are in his own hand-writing; and all are endorsed by himself, "Copy of my letters to the duke of Marlborough."**

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

Justifies himself against a report, that he had declared a regiment had been given to colonel Jones through the recommendation of Harley.

MY LORD; June 22, 1708.

I HOPE your grace will excuse the liberty I am now taking to trouble you with a long story, wherein, as I

* In the quarto edition, the ciphers used in this correspondence were all inserted, because I was doubtful of some; but having since had access to the Marlborough Papers, I have ascertained nearly all; and have, therefore, inserted the names, leaving only those ciphers which I was unable to appropriate.

cannot but think your grace is in some measure concerned, soe I take myself to be more than ordinarily obliged to give you a true relation of what, without doubt, you will hear from other hands.

The giving colonel Lillington's regiment to colonel Jones has occasioned much discourse in town; and people in accounting for his interest to obtain it, have chiefly in the coffee-houses attributed it to Mr. Harley. I understand your grace wrote a letter to your brother Mr. George Churchill, wherein you intimated something of this nature. Your grace best knows what you wrote, and what use you designed should be made of it; but Mr. Churchill, as he confessed himself to me, showed your letter both to the queen and the prince; told them that I had wrote your grace word, that Mr. Harley had recommended colonel Jones to the prince; and told the queen that I recommended him, which I suppose he wrote your grace word of too. He farther added to the queen and prince that I had given this report all over the town, and that Jones obtained this regiment by Mr. Harley's interest. Her majesty and the prince resented this very highly, insoemuch that the queen spoke to my lord treasurer about it, who was soe kind as to lett me know it, that I might have an opportunity of clearing myself. How it came to be said, that I had given your grace any such account I know not; for the fact I must refer to my letter to you of the first instant. But here your grace will give me leave to observe, that as I think it my duty to give your grace an account of all transactions in the army affairs that passe here, soe I hope, I am not to be called upon to answer to the queen and prince for every thing that I write to your grace. If I then had had any grounds to suspect this recommendation, I had certainly mentioned it to you, as I doe every thing which I think can give you the least light into what is doeing: In what circumstances I then had been when I was forced to produce a copy of my letter to the

queen, I leave it to you to determine, who, I am confident will never encourage a practice that will bring any body into trouble for a faithful discharge of their duty to you.

As for my recommending Jones to this post, I shall only say, I never heard of the man's name, and knew not that there was such an officer in the army; and the prince has done me the justice to tell the queen, I am clear of this: though I suppose the chief use of this part of the story was, to make your grace think I had done a thing of this consequence without your grace's knowledge or direction; not but that I believe Mr. Churchill thought it would sound well with the queen, and much for my advantage, that I had recommended a colonel to the prince, and afterwards fathered it upon Mr. Harley.

To prove that I had reported about town, that this commission was obtained by Mr. Harley's interest, Mr. Churchill himself told me the story thus: that upon receiving your grace's letter, he sent Mr. William Churchill to Mr. Hopkins to desire this commission might be stopped, where in discourse betwixt them two, Hopkins should say, that Mr. Harley's interest had procured this commission, and quoted me for his authority, which your brother saith, W. Churchill telling him, he could not forbear acquainting the queen and prince with it, and the queen immediately declared, she would take notice of this: upon which Mr. Churchill desired her majesty to stay a little, till he should be more exactly informed; and thereupon, he saith, he sent Mr. W. Churchill a second time to Mr. Hopkins to be more particular with him. When upon W. Churchill's telling Hopkins that the prince had heard this report and was angry; Hopkins replied, Walpole must answer it, for he told it me. This is the substance of what your brother did acknowledge he had told the queen. When I had heard all this I looked out Mr. Hopkins, who went immediately with

me to your brother's house (W. Churchill being then out of town) and there declared to his face, that I was never named in the conversation betwixt him and W. Churchill; and had the good fortune to have Mr. Craggs by at the second meeting mentioned, who declared the same thing, and both of them gave me leave to use their names to the queen upon this occasion. I went directly to Kensington, and made my complaint of this unusual treatment both to the queen and to the prince. I produced a copy of my letter to your grace, and told them the whole as I have now related it; and they were both pleased to say they were fully satisfied. Since W. Churchill is come to town, who solemnly protests, that he never named me to G. Churchill, nor Hopkins to him, and has given me leave to declare this to the queen and prince, which I shall doe the first opportunity. Now I have given your grace a plain account of this very extraordinary transaction, I shall avoid making any reflection upon it: for I am with the greatest respect imaginable, &c.

1710.

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Forces the lines of Douay—Considers it as a fortunate circumstance that the French did not bravely defend them—Desires to have the commissions forwarded soon.

SIR; April the 24th, 1710.

YOU will see by the letters from the army, as well as those from Holand, the success it has pleased God to bless us with. I may assure you it is gone much faster than we did propose to ourselves; for if thay had, which we did with reason expect, defended their

lines even with the troops thay had, it must have cost us many thousand lives. The next day we obliged the marischal Villars to abandon the river Scarp, which other ways would have obliged us to have taken our march by Arras, which by want of provision and forage must have proved very troublesome; but God be praised wee have invested Douay, and as soon as the cahnon arrives shall attack it with vigor.—As this is I think likely to be a very active campagne, I think it for her majesty's service that the officers may be incorag'd; I have marked the dates in my letter to the queen, from whence I beg she will be pleas'd to allow the promotions; you will receive her majesty's commands, and as soon as possible send over the commissions for the officers of this army, the rest may be dispatched afterwardes, so that you should send me the names of all that will be promoted.

DUKE OR MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Encloses a copy of his letter to the queen.

SIR; April the 24th, 1710.

The enclos'd letter is what you will read to the queen.

The copie of the queen's letter.

MADAME;

AS God has been pleas'd to bless your majesty's armes with the success of passing the line, and investing of Douay so early in the yeare, we must expect in this campagne a great deal of action, so that I think it absolutely necessary for your service that at the officers shou'd be incorag'd as much as possible, and

that those officers who have not the advantage of actually serving in the field may have no reason to complain, but on the contrary, to be sensible of your favour, I wou'd humbly desire you wou'd allow of my directing Mr. Walpole to lay before you, for your orders the names of all such major-generals as have their commissions dat'd in the yeare 1708-9, and such brigadiers as are dat'd in the year 1706-7, and all the colonels dat'd 1705, may have their regular promotions, by which you will do justice to the merit of many officers, who will chearfully venture their lives for your service.

You must let no body know that I send you this copie, so that you must desire the queen that she will be pleas'd to give you the dates in her letter.

I have this moment received yours of the 4th, and I am entirely of your opinion, that Hobart and Ferrars must be added to the number of brigadiers, as well as colonel Sutton. This must be done, but not take notice of at this time to the queen.

DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Without date or signature, but endorsed "Duke of Marlborough; received April 28, O.S. 1710.")

Expresses himself highly dissatisfied with the queen's conduct, and if he only consulted his own inclination, desirous of resigning.

For yourself only.

I AM extreamly obliged to you for the account you give of the queen's present temper, which I believe to be such, that if I considered onely myself, I wou'd not serve one minut longer. I send you by this post a cypher for some few names, that you may yearafter

write with freedome. My letter by this post is write so as you may read it to the queen. I having follow'd your advice as to Mr. Masham, it would be unjust not to put lord North in this promotion, so that you must lett me have a commission for him.

COPY OF A LETTER FROM ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

He has laid the list of the promotions before the queen, who strongly interests herself in favour of colonel Hill and colonel Masham—Advises the duke not to oppose her inclination—Congratulates him on his successes.

MY LORD; Whitehall, April 18—29, 1710.

I HAVE the honour of your Grace's commands of the 24th instant, and was yesterday with the queen to receive her commands about the promotion. Shee ordered me to lay before her the lists of such as were designed for this promotion, which I just now carry'd to her majesty. By what your grace wrote to me formerly I took it for granted that you designed the promotion of lieutenants generall should go no further than sir Richard Temple and lord Stair, which I acquainted the queen with.

As for the brigadeers, your letter is generall to all whose commissions are dated in 1706-7, and there being no dispute about those of the latter end of that promotion, and some of them as Sybourgh and Rellum serving with your grace, I presume you meant all those should be made majors generall, altho' you once said you designed the promotion should go no further than Evans.

As to the collonells, your letter to the queen saith

all collonells dated in 1705. I do apprehend that will carry that promotion much farther than you designed, if all are to be made brigadeers whose commissions are dated in any part of the year 1705; and your grace haveing in a former letter to me said you design'd it should go no further than the 25th March, 1705. I told the queen I thought that was your sence now, altho' express'd in generall; Shee mentioned collonel Hill to me, whose commission is dated in 1705; I told her there was no hardshipp to him when the promotion stop'd short of him, and to take in the whole year would make it a very great promotion, and more than what I thought your grace design'd; she did not insist upon this but ordered me to write to your grace to know how farr you did design this promotion. But upon the lists of collonells she was very ready about the affair of collonel Masham, and asked me how many more would be affected with the order about brevetts besides him; I told her Sutton, Herbert, and Ferrars. She was of opinion at first they should all be made brigadeers, but I prevailed with her to let me write to your grace first, and have your opinion about it; which she consented to, but I believe is determined already, and as I apprehended said shee would write to you about it. Your grace has already hinted to me your thoughts about the other three gentlemen, and when he will be the single instance, and what I am affraid would be overruled, I am humbly of opinion 'tis not worth disputing, especially now it is put in this method to come from your grace; so that I shall stop all the commissions that are not to be sent to your grace till I hear from you again, and the commissions of those gentlemen who have the honour to serve under your grace shall forthwith be dispatched and sent over to you. Inclosed is the list of those whose commissions will be now dispatched. I hope I have not mistaken your grace's sence in this affair, wherein I am sure I have made no willfull mistake.

It was an infinite satisfaction to me to hear of your grace on the right side of the Scarp. Pray God for ever bless and preserve you, and make your ennemys at home fall before you, as fast as they fly from you abroad. I am with the greatest duty, truth, and fidelity, &c.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

Acquaints him with the queen's earnest desires that Mrs. Masham's brother should be made a brigadier, and with the satisfaction expressed by the queen at Marlborough's compliance in favour of Mr. Masham.

MY LORD; Whitehall, April 28,—May 9, 1710.

WHEN I first waited on the queen about the promotion shee ordered me to leave with her a list of the colonels, and the dates of their commissions. Since I had the honour to trouble you last the queen sent for me, and after a great deal of preamble and beating about the bush said, that she had been considering the letter she had from your grace, and the letter you wrote to the lord treasurer, wherein you expressed yourself desirous to encourage all the officers that were in service with you, and your letter being for the whole year 1705; she was of opinion it was proper to make all the colonels of that year brigadeers. I told her I was satisfied you had no such designs, as that would extend to so many in your army, that I thought it might cause great confusion and difficultys about command in a confederate army, and used all the arguments I was able to diswade from this step without consulting your grace; and upon the whole made such objections, that

she came to name Mrs. Masham's brother again; and after I had diswaded her from giving such directions without your advice, she commanded me to write you word that she did desire Mrs. Masham's brother might be made a brigadier now, but did not insist upon it, if you had any objections. She observed that the promotion came within one of him, and within six weeks of the date of his commission; and tho' she twice said she did not insist upon it, she oftner said she desired it might be done by adding colonel Gore and him to the promotions, and to let it stop there. I dare not advise in this case, whether your grace should comply, or by giving plausible reasons that relate to your own service abroad put it off till the end of the campaign. If one could be assured that it would end here, and this honour extend only to the service of one family, perhaps it were adviseable to be once more easy; but if it is to go on, a stop at some time must be putt to it; the queen express'd all the deference in the world to your opinion, and told me, that great application had been made her for lord Mordaunt's regiment, but she would not meddle.

I have just now read your letter of the 5th of May, to the queen, and never saw more satisfaction than was express'd at your compliance upon the last account; your grace is best judge what inference is to be made from that, and whether if there are not to be many instances, it may not help to make things easy. But in this, as in all other matters, your grace's opinion and commands shall be my sole guide, for 'tis your service that I have most at heart.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

Mr. Masham returns thanks for his promotion—Complaints of the duke of Ormond shown to be unfounded.

MY LORD; Whitehall, May 2—11, 1710.

SINCE I had the honour to trouble your grace last, colonel Masham was with me to thank me for his promotion, and expressed himself very senceable of his obligations to your grace, and said as much on that occasion as he had words to express, and if I am not mistaken, the queen is not a little pleas'd that there was no difficulty made on that occasion.*****

When I last waited upon the queen, she told me that the duke of Ormond had complained that due regard was not shewn to him here in England, as general of the horse, and particularly that your humble servant did send the queen's orders to the captain of grannadiers to conduct money to Portsmouth, &c. without taking notice of him, and did desire that no orders might be given to any of the horse here in England but by himself, and that all the routs and marching orders and appointments of quarters might be under his direction. I told the queen that these affairs were in the same method that they had been for nineteen years, which appears by the office books, and that I did apprehend this would be to give the duke of Ormond a power or command here which would be entirely new, upon which the queen agreed it should remain upon the old foot. But I am fully satisfy'd this was an instance of trying their strength and putting on of their own people upon a better foot in the army. —I understand that brigadier Poultny writes to your grace this night about his being made a major-general,

which I conceive he is not to be, haveing sold out of the army; I must observe to your grace that he gives himself great airs, and talks of doing his business by the duke of Shrewsbury if he is refused. I thought it proper you should know this, but I would not do him a prejudice.—Lord Wharton is gone for Ireland; he has gott his commission for the regiment of dragoons in Ireland, Lord Treasurer was privy and consenting to this.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

The queen insisted on Mrs. Masham's brother, colonel Hill, being made a brigadier, and ordered that the commission should be made out and sent over to the army, but was prevailed upon by his representations to suspend her orders until an answer came from the duke —Hints that he has offended the duchess of Marlborough for the advice he gave in regard to Mrs. Masham's brother, and is apprehensive of being exposed to her resentment.

MY LORD; Whitehall, May 12,—21, 1710.

YESTERDAY the queen sent for me, and after some little matters of noe consequence told me upon consideration, she was of opinion, that the promotion of generall officers stopping where it did within one of Mrs. Masham's brother, it would be thought by all the world, that this was done in particular prejudice to him; order'd me therefore to notifie her pleasure to her secretary of state for three more commissions of brigadiers, viz. Gore, Hill, Honywood, and said she wou'd then sign all the other general officers' commissions, that they might be sent together by this night's post. I beg'd leave to remind her of the commands she had already given me to write to your grace, that

she did desire coll. Hill might be made a brigadier, but did not insist upon it, if you had any objections to it, and represented what surprise it must be to you after that to have commissions of brigadiers in your own army, sent over without waiting your answer. I represented in the strongest terms I was able, the mortification such a step must be to your grace, the unreasonablenesse of doing any thing disagreeable to you in the army, and the ill consequence that must attend the lessening of your creditt or authority in the army, and said a great deal more than can come within the compasse of a letter, or is proper for me to repeat, and did at last, but with the greatest difficulty, prevail with her not to order those three commissions untill she heard your grace's opinion in answer to my letter. She told me at the same time she would sign none of the other commissions till then, and did confesse to me, that she had stopt them with this view, but afterwards upon a more mature recollection, and after I had said a great deal to her upon the subject, she commanded me strictly not to tell any body, and in particular not to lett you know that she stopt the commissions upon this account, but would have it thought as it hitherto has been, that the delay was accidentall. I have told you now in short the substance of a conversation which lasted above half an hour, and beg leave to observe to your grace, that to me 'twas very plain that Honywood was now named as a blind, that it might not seem to be a particular regard to Mrs. Masham, but Honywood I am sure will not be insisted upon, if the other is complyed with. I am likewise too much afraid, lett your answer be what it will, that I shall have positive orders to do it, or that no other commissions will be signed till this is done; I believe too a great deal of this proceeds from the impertinence of the duke of Somerset, who thinks himself Honywood's patron, and the reasons and arguments that the queen was instructed with, were such, that noebody but one who

was both 92 and 93 could suggest. There was a great stresse putt upon the appearance, that it must be thought that the stop was made here with a particular prejudice.

And now, my lord, that I have represented this matter as clearly to you as I am able, I dare not venture to give you my opinion, and pardon me, if I think with great reason I say, I dare not, when I find I am already suspected by the duchess of Marlborough, for what I wrote to you about the affair of colonel Masham, and I shall be in a very unhappy circumstance, if I venture to say that to the queen, which perhaps few servants you have would have done, and at the same time shall be thought to act a trimming game. I gave you my opinion as an honest and faithfull servant, and did consult three or four people here, that are, I am confident, your surest friends, who from the very highest did all agree in the opinion I then gave, which proceeded entirely from a due regard to your honour and service, and nothing else has the least influence upon my thoughts and actions, and as my obligations to the duchess of Marlborough, are so infinite, that I would dye rather than deservedly lose her good opinion, so I beg, if my judgement may sometimes lead me to think, what is not altogether agreeable to her, you will not expose me to her resentment, if you do not distrust my sincerity, which believe me you never shall have reason to doe, for I am with all possible truth, &c.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed "lord Marlborough, received May 26. O. S.")

Expresses his concern at the uneasiness shown by the duchess of Marlborough—Mentions her true esteem for Mr. Walpole. Is dissatisfied with the queen's behaviour, and imputes it to the suggestions of Harley and the duke of Somerset—Wishes to retire—but will be guided by the Whigs.

SIR; June 2, 1710, N. S.

I WAS so tier'd and sleepy, that I cou'd not return you my thanks by the last post for your two letters of the 5th and 9th, I have since receiv'd the favour of yours of the 12th, and am extremely concern'd at the uneasiness you mention of lady Marlborough. I know she has a trew vallu and estime for you. I desire you will continue writing with ffreedome, and be assur'd that from hence forward, no body living shall be acquainted with what you write. The account you give mee of the conversation you have had with the queen concerning the commissions for the general officers gives me so mallincolly a view that will not only make me incapable of success, but will at last make it impossible for me with honour to serve. I wou'd not be mistaken, and if I am you will be best able to sett me right, I do not think that the queen does this in order to make me quit, but I believe the duke of Somerset and Mr. Harley can have no other intention in making the queen give me such sensible mortifycations, but in order to make me quit, and to make their court by itt to Mrs. Masham when ever I am independant of 91,* Mrs. Masham will not find

* Probably the Court.

her account by such a step. My opinion is, to follow my own inclinations of retiring, as soon as wee have peace, but I have resolv'd never to depart from the intirest of the whigs, so I will take no resolution for my own conduct, but in conjunction with them: I do beg and conjure you to take nothing unkindly of lady Marlborough, for she is sincerely honest to what you wish. You will see by the accounts by this post that the marishall de Villars intentions were to have attack'd us last Friday, but seeing the advantagious situation of our army, I believe he has laid aside all thoughts of fighting, til after this siege.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Gives reasons for desiring to limit the number of promotions—Boasts of the unanimity of the allied army as the effect of his management—Expresses his readiness to receive marshal Villars, should he attack them.

SIR; Camp before Douay, May 29th, 1710.

SINCE my last I have receiv'd the favour of yours of the 28th, and I desire you will with my humble duty acquaint her majesty from mee, that the trew reason for my restraining the promotions of brigadiers to the 25th of March, was not only from the numbers and confusion it must have occasion'd amongest the queen's subjects, but also have given great disatisfaction to all the forainers, this army being compos'd of eight diffirent nations, and next to the blessing of God, we owe all our success to our unanimity, which has been hethertoo, as if in reallity we were but one nation,

so that I beg her majesty will be pleas'd to allowe of its stoping at the 25th of March; and as soon as a promotion can be made with any coullor of reason, I shall be sure to take care of those mention'd by the queen. We are in expectation of seeing how far the marishal de Villars will put his threats into execution, we have marked camps on etch side of the town, so that we shall be ready to receive him either on the plains of Lenz, or those of Bouchain; we hope these easterly winds may keep the grase and corn so backwarde, that he will not be able to find forage for his army til towardes the end of this month, til which time we have provid'd dry forage for ours, so that we shall have given six weeks dry forage to the whole army, which has been hethertoo thought impossible, I have told general Merideth that he shall have lord Mordant's ridgment, and I am endeavouring to setle the mind of the several officers which pretend to his, so as that it may be dispos'd of as may give most satisfaction; as soon as I can setle it, I shall give her majesty an account of the whole, and at the same time desire the commission for sir Richard Temple for the dragoons. I desire you will assure the queen, that in this, and all my actions, her intirest shall be my chiefest vew. I am with truth.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

Prevails on the queen to wait for an answer from the duke of Marlborough, before she confers rank on Mr. Hill—Informs him that she is in a better humour—Advises the duke to consent to the queen's wishes, but in such a manner as not to disgust the foreign officers.

MY LORD; Whitehall, May the 28d.—June 3, 1710.

I HAVE the honour of your grace's commands of the 19th instant, which, having been out of town all

last week, I had noe opportunity to read to the queen till this morning, and cannot but say this matter ended a little better than I expected. I took all the pains I was able to bring it to the most easy issue, and after a great deal of conversation and arguing, too long for the compasse of a letter, the queen has consented to wait for your answer to my letter of the 12th inst.; I believe indeed chiefly in hopes that your grace will upon that representation comply with what is desired. I think it is but just to acquaint you, that the queen was upon this occasion in a great deal better temper than when this matter was discours'd of before, and tho' she seem'd then determin'd to doe it without any regard to your grace, the stile to-day was very much alter'd, and at the same time it was easy to discover the greatest desire for the thing, and yett noe little unwillingnesse to doe it without your approbation, soe much that I am confident that if your grace did come into any expedient to accommodate this matter, it would give great satisfaction to the queen. Now, my lord, the cheif difficulty you were pleased to mention being in regard to the foreigners, suppose you complyed soe far, as to consent to this commission, but not to be produced or made use of till the end of the campaign, in the mean time to be sent to your grace to be delivered when you thought proper, this I am sure would satisfie and please more than a little.

I have acquainted lord Treasurer with all that hath passed, who tells me, he is entirely of opinion, that the matter should be made easy, and has, as I apprehended, wrote you word so, and it being now more than probable from a great many circumstances that if the queen was made easy about Mrs. Masham, a great many difficulties would be remov'd, your grace is best judge whether any advantage may be made of this instance. The duke of Somerset is more impertinent than ever, and I have endlesse trouble in preventing his follies in little things in the army.

§

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed "lord Marlborough, received June, 4, O.S. 1710.")

Expresses his inclination to satisfy the queen about colonel Hill's commission—The French threaten a battle—Wishes success to the queen's arms.

SIR; June the 12th, 1710.

SINCE my last we have received three postes from England, amongest which I have had the favour of yours of the 23d. The inclination the queen showes for the having Mr. Hill a brigadier, makes me desire that you will assure her majesty that I shall not onely in this, but in every thing that may be in my power, endeavour to make her easy, so that as soon as this campagne is end'd, I shall at my first arrivall order it so that his commission may be sign'd without prejudice to her service, or mortefycation to her faithfull servant. The marshall de Villars continues dayly to assure his generals that if there be no peace, the king has resolved to decide the fate of Europe by a battle in these plains; a battel at a distance is easily resolv'd and order'd, but when two such armies as consist at least of above one hundred and thirty thousand men each shall be in presence, the most determined courage will be uneasy till the event of so great an action be known. The great God which has hetherto blessed her majesty's armes, will I hope give his protection to our just cause.

I desire you will speake to the queen that orders may be given for sir Richard Temple's commission for the ridgment of dragoons. I am, &c.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Without date, but endorsed "received June 5, 1710. O.S.")

Uneasy at the situation of affairs;—will not act but with the advice of his friends.

For yourself.

I AM so very uneasy at the humour and temper that is now in the court, that I dare not trust my own judgement, fearing I might hurt my friends, so that I desire you will show my letter* which comes at the same time with this to lord Sunderland, and that he will advise with our friends; for however uneasy itt may be to me, I am desirous you shou'd give in answere to the queen what they shall resolve upon concerning Mrs. Masham's brother. If they approve of my letter, you must then read it to the queen.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

The queen desires that the commission may be made out for colonel Hill, and sent to the duke of Marlborough to be delivered at the end of the campaign—will write herself to the duke on that subject—Walpole advises with Godolphin and Sunderland—Is kindly received by the duchess of Marlborough.

MY LORD; Whitehall, May 26,—June 6, 1710.

I WAS this day honoured with your grace's commands of the 2d of June in which you have given me

* This letter is missing.

opinion as to the affair of Mrs. Masham's brother; I was at a losse what measures to take, in which I thought noe body soe proper to be consulted as the lord treasurer, who was of opinion that the queen should be told that your grace seem'd by your letter under great mortifications that any body should have power enough with the queen to impose any thing in the army disagreeable to you; but however I was of opinion that you did expect this would be done. The queen upon this immediately ask'd for the letter which was not proper to be produc'd, but I explain'd what I thought was your sense. The queen was not a little at a losse what to do, and seemed both unwilling to comply, or deny; at last desir'd it might be done, but in the softest manner that was possible. The comission is therefore to be taken out by me and sent over to your grace to be deliver'd at the end of the campaign, or when you shall think fit. The queen promised to write this night to your grace, to assure you that noe mortification was meant to you; and I must say that in this, and the last conference, there seem'd a great struggle betwixt the desire of doeing the thing, and not putting a mortification upon your grace.

I hope I have not erred in this matter, wherein I have work'd the queen to a better manner of doing it, than was at first determin'd, and not haveing any positive directions from your grace, I consulted the lord treasurer, lord Sunderland, and Mr. Craggs, who all thought the dispute was best to be ended in this manner.

The commissions will now be all sign'd and I believe sent over to your grace together next post. I have had the honour to wait upon lady Marlborough, and hope I have given full satisfaction. I have noe commands from your grace about Pulteney and Bissett, I find they both think 'tis left entirely to me; I beg your grace's directions what you would have done, for which I shall wait.

I wish your grace all possible successe and glory, altho' your enemies may chance to reap the fruits of the great services which you doe your country, and which noe body else could doe.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Proposes if colonel Hill's commission should not come to declare him a brigadier, to show his forwardness in obliging the queen—French have repassed the Scarp, and seem to decline a battle—wishes for peace.

SIR; June the 19th, 1710.

WEE received the day before yesterday the two mails of the 26th and 30th of the last month, by which you acquaint me with her majesty's pleasure as to coll. Hills comission, I shall expect it by the next post, but if itt shou'd not then come, I intend to send for coll. Hill, and declare him brigadier, so that I may the better show my forwardness, in executing what is so earnestly desir'd by the queen; you will see by the letters of this post, that the French have repass'd the Scarp, by which I have been oblig'd to repass the Scarp also with the army I command, that of prince Eugene continues behind the entrenchement, the duke of Berwick is return'd to Paris, so that I beleive their designe of a battel is very much cool'd, thay having also sent 13 battalions into Bethun, and the ridgment of Alsasse into Ypres; I have so many reasons to wish for peace, that you may be sure if a good occasion offer'd, I should be glad to put a speedy end to this warr by a battel, but I think France must be madd if they venture it upon equall terms: I am with truth, &c.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

Sends a commission for Mr. Hill—Rumours prevail that Sunderland is to be dismissed—Harley possesses the principal influence over the queen—Duke of Shrewsbury connected with Mrs. Masham and Harley.

MY LORD; Whitehall, June 2, 1710.

I SEND you now under a cover by itself the commission that has caused soe much trouble, 'tis by order of the queen that 'tis sent to your grace to be delivered when you shall think fitt: the queen ordered me to write this post to Mrs. Masham's brother, and to lett him know that his commission was sent over and in your custody to be delivered when it should be thought proper, to which effect I now write. All the general officers commissions are now sign'd, and will be sent over to Mr. Cardonnel as the agents take them out. Your grace knows that all the lt. generals are of one date, viz. January 1st, that if you design otherwise you will give the orders to Mr. Cardonnel before they are deliver'd out. The town has been this week in a new ferment about alterations, and particularly lord Sunderland, was on Wednesday positively said to be out. Your grace must have better accounts of these things than I can give you, but 'it is plain to me from my observation that Mr. Harley by Mrs. Masham has the cheif and allmost sole influence upon the queen. The duke of Shrewsbury is in with them, and when I see it, I shall believe that he differs with Harley as much as he pretends, which I think is not much neither. In my poor opinion, there never was any thing of half the consequence as removeing lord Sunderland, talk'd on so long, without some industry to obviate a blow that strikes directly at the whigs, and can scarce be thought on without regard to your grace, to whom I have such

infinite obligations and such a perfect honour for, that let what will happen, you shall solely govern, and may entirely depend upon me. 'Tis impossible to imagine the dragoons commission should be delay'd, till 'tis in other peoples power to give it. I send coll. Hill's letter with a flying seal for your grace's perusall. Be pleased to have it seal'd and delivered when you have read it.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.

[Walpole Papers.]

Laments the situation of affairs in England—Hints that Sunderland will be dismissed—and that no attempts are made to save him—and conjectures that his dismission will be followed by the disgrace of Godolphin and Marlborough.

MY LORD; Whitehall, June 6th, 1710.

I YESTERDAY had the honour of your grace's commands of the 2d instant, which I communicated to those you were pleased to command me, and by their advice, read it to the queen, who said little to it, but was cheifly solicitous to consider whither this letter was wrote before a letter from the queen to your grace was received, which 'twas most plain it was; but nothing else pass'd worth your notice. I have received orders to notifie for sir R. Temple's commission, which was done without any thing being said at all but a bare consent.

I think our affairs here at home in a most unaccountable situation. Lord Sunderland 'tis agreed by *all is to be removed, and by none endeavoured to be sav'd.* I don't know what this means, but I am sure it must end in the dissolution of this parliament, and in the distruction of the whigs; and I wish to God your grace and the lord treasurer can be safe in those circumstances,

I cannot tell whither you have been acquainted that lord Somers has wrote to lord Townshend to bring it about if he can, that the pensionary should write to M. Vryberg* upon the reports that are abroad of the changes expected here, and to represent the fatal consequences that may attend such a step, and how far the state may be induc'd thereby to make an ill peace. This surely must make an impression upon the queen, or at least leave such a weight upon those whose advice is now taken, that certainly the duke of Shrewsbury is much alter'd, if Mr. Harley can prevail with him, who is at present *the only vissible minister* to take such a step. Your grace is better advised; but I am fully of opinion, that if you can conceive that the lord treasurer is backward upon this occasion, too much cannot be said to quicken him; and pardon an overzeal that thinks the saveing lord Sunderland deserves the uttmost industry, which alone can preserve the parliament upon which the whigs entirely depend, and *I am afraid* your grace has no surer friend. But lett what will happen, I am entirely devoted to your service, and will for ever be so.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed—" Received 28, 1710, O. S.")

Expresses his uneasiness at the situation of affairs in England—Will act in conjunction with his friends—Is of opinion that the measures adopted will delay the conclusion of a peace.

SIR; Tournay, June 23, 1710.

I AM now to thank you for yours of the 2d, and be assur'd I shall always endeavour to deserve the conti-

* In the first edition, the cypher 65, was explained for count Gallas; that of 116, for the emperor, and 62 was not identified; but from the Marlborough Papers it appears that 116 meant the states, 62 the pensionary, and 65 for M. Vryberg, minister of the states in England.

nuance of your friendshipe. All the letters which I received by that post, have given me so mallencolly a prospect of what I am to expect from England, that I am very uneasy in my mind; for I wou'd willingly not take any resolution but such as might be judg'd right by my friends. If these new skeemers are fond of a peace, they are not very dexterous; for most certainly what is doing in England will be a great incoragement to France for the continuing the warr. I should be glad to have your opinion as to my behaviour. I am and ever shall be with truth your's, &c.

HORACE WALPOLE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Thanks him in the name of lord Townshend for his account of the situation of affairs—Is convinced that the divisions at home affect the negociations for peace, and infuse a spirit of haughtiness into the French.

DEARE BROTHER; Hague, June the 24th, 1710.

HIS excellency has had your's of the 5th inst.*; which came under cover to me, and was brought by coll. Clayton, and yesterday sir Nicholas Worlstenhome delivered the cyphers, and his lordship desires you would accept from me his thanks for the full tho' most melancholy account you have given him of affairs at home; I am so far convinced that our divisions at home affect to the greatest degree our negociations, that I believe they are the reason why the French ministers will not speake to the purpose about peace, and of late seem very haughty; and I dont doubt will continue so as long as the talk of a new minister and a new parliament is on foot; either of which, for the other

* This letter is missing.

must necessarily follow, will create the greatest confusion among the allys, especially to intimidate this people who daily appear very inquisitive, and apprehensive of new measures in England: which would certainly weaken the confidence they have in her majesty, and cool their opposition to France, and hasten the peace on any terms.

By letters that came last night, we heare nothing more of lord Sunderland, so that all things we hope continue as they were. What is desired of the pensionary to Vryberg is done, but lord Townshend to Mr. Boyle is not thought proper, it might look too much concerted. But should lord Somers and the duke of Devonshire be of opinion that it is still necessary, lord Townshend neither wants resolution nor inclination to do it in the strongest manner, but for the reason mentioned. The duke of Marlborough is to the last degree uneasy; prince Eugene is mightily affected with it; and the pensionary very much alarmed.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE* TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Expresses his concern at the situation of affairs—Suspects that some of the Whigs are acting a double part—Is grateful for obligations received.

DEAR WALPOLE; Camp before Douay, June 25, 1710.

I CAN have but little satisfaction from the success of my own affairs when I think upon how precarious a foot all my friends stand, I am so much concern'd for you in particular, that I believe my uneasiness for you is more than you feel for yourself. If the rout is to be

* Afterwards lord Cobham.

general amongst the whiggs, it will be better for us and easier borne than if it fall upon a part, where he that has the least honesty will be sure to take care of one. It is a miserable thing that at this juncture when all at home and abroad is at stake, that any one whigg should be suspected of playing a double game; whether there are any such you know better than we do here, but I think there has been so much irresolution discover'd that some people will always be blam'd for want of firmness if they escape so. Wee whiggs here are quite of another make, and those that ought to judg the best, think you have drawn this upon yourselves, by your complyance from time to time; if you care to have me write more at large send me such a character as you make use of to write hither, but let the numbers be different.

So much for ratiocination; I am to thank you dear Walpole for the friendly part you have taken to me, but my lord duke has been so tender of Macartney, and has concern'd himself so much for him, that nothing was left for me to doe, but to yield him the pas with as good a grace as I cou'd, and to seem willingly to submit to what I wou'd fain have hinder'd: but it is over and I shall think no more of it, unless to remember the obligations I have to you in that and upon a thousand other occasions, which I know no other way of acknowledging but by the trivial assurance of my being ever, dear Walpole, entirely yours.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO LORD TOWNSHEND.

[Walpole Papers.]

Consternation occasioned by the removal of Sunderland.—The remaining members of administration are uniformly of opinion, that Marlborough and themselves should continue in their respective posts, with a view, if possible, to prevent the dissolution of parliament.—The queen declares that no farther changes are intended, but gives no assurances that the parliament will not be dissolved.

MY LORD; June 16th—27, 1710.

WE are all at present under the greatest consternation at the removal of lord Sunderland, which tho' expected when the blow was struck, gave the greatest alarm to all the town, and had immediately affected the whole creditt, if a great deal of pains had not been taken to quiett people's minds by making them believe noe further changes would be made, which I think was quite necessary to instill into people's minds, at least at present, till we can see what further will be attempted, which I frankly own to you is my opinion will soon be explain'd, notwithstanding all that is said to the contrary.

Your lordship will have an account from other hands, that lord Cowper, lord Halifax, lord Somers, the duke of Devonshire, lord Orford, the duke of Newcastle, the lord treasurer, Mr. Boyle, and all the whigs were unanimously of opinion,* that the duke of Marlborough must goe on at present as well as themselves, to see what can be done, and in the first place, to use all proper means to save this parliament upon which all certainly depends.

The queen has been soe sensible of the ill consequences that threaten'd upon the apprehensions of

* See their letter to the duke of Marlborough on this occasion, in The Conduct of the duchess of Marlborough, p. 237, and in Tindal.

further changes, that yesterday the duke of Newcastle was ordered to carry the heads of the bank to the queen, when her majesty assur'd them, there was not the least thoughts of making any further change in the ministry, and desired them to satisfie all their friends in this particular, which has a little quieted the city. Now to give you all the light that is possible, I think this will stand for nothing, because the queen avoided at the same time declaring whither the parliament should be dissolv'd or not, and when lord Somers, the lord treasurer, and the duke of Newcastle had occasion to touch upon that particular, the queen only said, she was not yett determin'd in that point, which is a demonstration that 'tis design'd or under consideration, but she waits in expectation of what may offer on the other side of the water, and it has been said that Michaelmas would be soon enough to dissolve the parliament, and the preventing that, is the only point at present that is to be labour'd.

I understand that Mr. Vryberg has had the same assurances to send to the states that were given to the bank, and that Mr. Boyle has the same orders to write to you, but not one word of the parliament; but the lord treasurer this morning bad me write to you, and give a hint to improve this opportunity when you should write your answer to Mr. Boyle which was understood might be in this manner; that the states had heard (which is supposed to be undoubtedly true) that there were not only designs of altering the ministry in England, but likewise of dissolveing this parliament; what effects both these had upon the affairs abroad, and even upon the negotiations of peace; that after the steps that had been taken, it was a great satisfaction to the states to have such assurances from the queen upon the first point, but if the other should happen, it would have the same consequences, not only because it must end in the first, but because if the parliament should be dissolved, that have been soe zealous for carrying

on this war and obtaining a good peace, the confederates would apprehend another parliament would be of another complexion, and might be induced to accept of a separate peace, or even comply with the terms of France; besides if the next parliament should be as good as this, there would be so much time lost before they could meet and their resolutions known, that it might have the same ill effect.

These are but hints which your lordship does not want, and will sett things in soe much a clearer light, that I ought to ask pardon for mentioning them, but it seems soe reasonable, that you with the pensionary may represent this in such a manner to Vryberg and to Mr. Boyle and have a fair handle from what is now a doeing, that it must bring the queen to determine against it, when your friends here are arm'd with such strong reasons, or at least putt her under a necessity of discovering what is resolv'd, for I presume if any thing of this nature comes from you, it will be putt in such a manner, that some answer must be given for the satisfaction of the states. When I write thus freely by the common post, I write under some concern, and noe body but the lord treasurer knows of my writing this to you, but for the better blind, I direct it to Mr. Poynts, rather than to you or Horace, and if you would send me a direction to some person, not of your own family, under whose cover I might write to you upon these occasions, I think it would still be more safe.

I shall be glad to have an account of the receipt of this, and of the wellfare of all your family, for noe body is more truely, and sincerely, &c.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed—"Lord Marlborough, June 30, 1710, N. S. Received 28, O. S.")

Expects the account of the removal of Sunderland—Declares his resolution to act according to the advice of his friends in England.

SIR; June the 30th, 1710.

I HAVE this morning receiv'd the favour of yours of the 13th, by other letters also, I am prepar'd to receive very speedily the disagreeable news of the removall of lord Sunderland. Our friends on the spot are best able to judge what is most proper to be done, and accordingly, I shall govern myself. You will know by the letters of this post, that the garrison marched out yesterday near five thousand men. I am with truth.

HORACE WALPOLE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed—"Brother Horace, July 1, 1710. N. S. Received June 28, 1710, O. S.)

The removal of Sunderland occasions as much consternation in Holland as in England.

Hague, July the 1st, 1710. N. S.

LORD TOWNSHEND was this morning favoured with one of the 16th, from you, and returns you his thanks and compliments for the light he has received from it; the consternation that the removall of lord Sunderland occasioned here, is as great as it can possibly be at London; particularly the pensionary and the minister of Hanover who are both generally very cautious and reserved on the account of party matters, are to the last degree affected with the uncertainty of affairs with

you; I am told that you will be the first sacrifice of the commoners, but since you have lately got the better of a very dangerous disorder in your naturall body, I hope you will work as well thro' the convulsions of the politick constitutions. I think the best way for you to write with more safety to lord Townshend is, to send his letter sometimes under cover to doctor Chamberlain, physician at his excellency's, sometimes to Mr. Cole, chaplain, or to Mr. Poyntz, and nott seal it with your own seal, at least the cover; you will acknowledge the receipt of this, and accept of the greatest transports of joy for your recovery, from yours, &c.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Recommends the whigs to endeavour to prevail on the duke of Shrewsbury to use his influence, that the parliament should not be dissolved.

SIR; Jully the 5th, 1710.

I HAVE receiv'd your's of 21 by coll. Panton, and I do agree intierly with you, that the intention of the duke of Shrewsbury and Mr. Harley is, to dismiss the parliament but as I think the whole depends upon that, I am of opinion, notwithstanding the part the duke of Shrewsbury has acted towardes lord Sunderland, that the whigs shou'd if possible take measures with the duke of Shrewsbury for the preservation of the parliament; this is also my opinion, and you may make use of itt to such of our friends as you shall think proper, I write by this opertunity to lord Sunderland to the same effect, so that if he be still in the town, you will be pleased to consult with him, I am ever yours.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Desires to hear freely about the duke of Shrewsbury.

SIR; August 11, 1710.

I HAVE not write hardly to any body, being in hopes of having an account of Mr. Craiggs being with you, but by my last letters of the 21st, I find he was not come nor news of him, so that I shall be in pain til I hear he be safe, fearing some accident at sea. As the fate of the parliament must before this be desided, we are very impatient of letters, and I desire that I may hear freely from you, what you think may be rely'd upon; I mean as to the duke of Shrewsbury. I am with the greatest truth ever yours.

HORACE WALPOLE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Necessity of procuring members if a new parliament should be assembled—Electress Sophia and the elector alarmed at the proceedings in England.

August 12th, 1710. N. S.

I HAVE now time to return you my thanks for your favour of the 18th past; we have this afternoon received the letters from England of the 25th and 28th, by which I had from you inclosed a printed paper of a letter from Petkum* to Buys, but noe other letter or any other news, so that I suppose things continue in the same uncertainty they did as to the parliament and the whigs tho' I heare from other hands that prepara-

* Petkum, minister to the duke of Holstein.

tions are making on both sides for a new parliament, in which case I believe you may have what you formerly desired as useful at such a juncture; and should that happen, the lord treasurer and the duke of Marlborough, must spare no pains nor expence on such an occasion, and I think great power and a long purse, should be put into the mighty hand of the whigs, who I dare say will make a prevailing use of it, and 274 must represent to the duchess of Marlborough, that a penny spent is twopence gott on such an occasion. I am told from good hands, that the tories have lately made great addresses to the electress Sophia, but without effect, for the electress, the elector, and all that house are very much alarmed at the late proceedings in England, and think it is time to look about them being apprehensive of 54; and are almost ready to declare for the whigs.

HORACE WALPOLE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed—" Brother Horace, August 18, 1710, N. S.")

Speculations on the probability of a dissolution of parliament, and on the effect of measures in England on the continent.

Hague, August the 18th, 1710, N. S.

DEAR BROTHER;

CAPTAIN Kennedy having promised to deliver this to you with his own hand, I venture to acquaint you that what I formerly desired, relating to what passed between the states and the queen upon the removal of lord Sunderland, was sent by last post under cover to T——y, and the direction to you was in French, with

your name false spelt; to prevent suspicion of the person that sent it; I desire to know by the first opportunity whether it came safe to hand; last night we had letters from England dated the 4th, but I was favoured with none from you by that occasion. It seems the dissolution of this parliament is still uncertain; and I must own I should nott be much concerned at the misfortune of loosing so good a house, supposing we could be assured that people's eyes are so far opened, and the whig interest soe strong in the country as to be able to have a majority of the right side by a new election; for altho' the hazard might for the present make the publick creditt fall; yet a new return of good members would soon make it rise, and putt it upon a better foot, than I am afraid you will find it at the last session of a dying parliament. For since there must be another chosen next summer; the expectations that the French have from our civill broyls will make them defer speaking sincerely about peace, untill they see what turn and effect the new elections will have in England, and the same reason will make people both at home and abroad very reserved in lending their money to our government; whereas a good new parliament will cutt off all hopes from France, and will be a great encouragement to the well intentioned to contribute their utmost to support us. But this is sayd upon the supposition of having the greatest probability of a good parliament by a new choice. In the mean time I believe this people can be kept very steady to the honest interest of England, and to the common cause, until they see what the commons of Great Britain, are like to doe, but att all events, I hope our friends will be very carefull about coming to any bargains; for the other side who have all the power with the queen will never make any advances for that end, untill they find they are nott able to support the violent measures they had at first concerted; so that a composition on our side I think can have no other effect than to give the

ennemy a present advantage, and divide the whigs, for the country whigs will always desire to act a free and independent part, and never care to be governed by the private intrigues of 91, and will immediately cry out they are given up; and should the next sessions by that means pass with differences, and confusion among our friends, it may have a very bad influence upon the ensuing elections.

* * * * * *

I can with great satisfaction assure you that the house of Hanover is very sensible of what is doing in England; of the deceitfull addresses of the tories and of the sincere intentions of the whigs to promote their interest; I cant forbeare telling you in confidence that I think the duke of Marlborough should be very diligent in making his court there, which I am afraid was formerly a little neglected; and I am perswaded he will find all imaginable regard, and confidence from thence.

My respects to the duke of Devonshire.

LORD TOWNSHEND TO GENERAL STANHOPE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Consternation occasioned by the removal of lord treasurer Godolphin.

DEAR SIR; Hague, August 26, 1710.

I MUST refer you to M. Walpole for an account of the news this place affords, as well of our confusions in England; from whence we had by the last post the fatal news of lord treasurer's being removed from his office, which has put this country into the greatest consternation. God only knows what destruction our new

ministry is preparing for us. I heartily wish you all imaginable success in your future enterprises, and beg you would do me the justice to believe that I am with the greatest truth and respect, &c.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

Alarmed at the removal of Godolphin.

SIR; August the 28th, 1710.

I HAVE received the favour of your's of the 8th, that as well as the rest of my letters brought me the surprising news of the white staf being taken from lord treasurer. I have for some time been prepar'd for these mortefycations, I at this distance can't see where this will end, but I am sure to the best of my understanding I will act like an honest man, and whilst employ'd will doe what I shall judge best for my queen and country, and as I relyes on your friendship, I must desire to hear often from you, I am with much truth.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Walpole Papers.]

(Endorsed—" Lord Marlborough, received 16th, O. S.")

Determines to act with the whigs.

SIR; Sept. 18, 1710.

YOU will know my thoughts by sir Ri. Temple; since his being gone Mr. Collins has brought me your

two letters of the 26th and the 1st of this month. I have beg'd of the lord treasurer to use his interest with Mr. Boyle, and I have write myself to lord Coninsbey; as Mr. Harley and those people spread all over England lyes, the honest people shou'd be industrious of letting the truth be known. I agree with you that the best thing is, to use all endeavours possible for the getting honest men into parliament, and lett what will happen, I shall always be ready for taking measures with the whigs, which sooner or later must bring all things right.

1716.

LETTER FROM THE KING TO THE PRINCE OF WALES.*

On the Instructions for his conduct during the King's absence and during the Session of Parliament.

MY DEAREST SON; July 5, 1716.

HAVING determined to visit shortly my German States, I cannot give you a more convincing proof of my paternal affection and the care I take of my people, than in establishing you as sole Regent of the kingdom during my absence, being fully persuaded that your duty towards me, your affection towards the nation, and your concern for the present and future interest of your family, will engage you in the strongest manner to acquit yourself in this important employment to your honour, which is inseparable from the happiness and advantage of my people.

And as I am persuaded that the principles of filial

*The draught of this Letter, which is in the Sunderland Papers preserved at Blenheim, is in the French tongue, and in the hand-writing of Mr. Poyntz.

duty and of your affection for me will move you to act in all respects conformably to my sentiments, and to communicate to me exactly all affairs of importance; I thought, for this reason, that it would be more convenient to you to receive from me in writing the essential part of my instructions on different affairs which may occur during the course of your administration; and which are of such a nature as to allow you to apprize me of them, and wait for my orders.

You will then leave to my immediate direction all the negotiations already begun, or which it will be necessary to begin hereafter, with foreign powers as well as the conclusion of all treaties, and the disposition of the archbishoprics and bishoprics in England and Ireland, and the deanries of Westminster and Windsor. You will place no one without my express direction in the cabinet or privy council, and you will not displace those who are there, nor deprive them of any of their respective offices of which I have left them in possession. You will not place or displace any one in my Household, in the Treasury, nor in the Admiralty. You will not dispose of any of the places which are held "*Quam diu se benè gesserint,*" or for life; and during my absence you will grant no reversion, nor make any donation of the revenue in lands or inheritance of the crown as well in Great Britain as in Ireland. You will not dispose of the orders of the Garter or St. Andrew; and you will not create any new peer of Great Britain or Ireland. You will not dispose of any government as well in the kingdom as in any of the plantations abroad, without my express consent, nor of any commission of lieutenant or superior rank in my Horse Guards, of major or above in my foot guards, nor of colonel or above in the army. In the same manner I reserve to myself the power of cashiering and reforming the body of the army which is now on foot.

However, you may be assured, that in the disposi-

tion of all the charges; I shall have all imaginable regard for your recommendation and for the information and lights with which you may furnish me. And although I think proper to reserve to myself the nomination of all the governors of places, and superior officers of the army, I give you nevertheless a full power of suspension, on complaints of misconduct of any officer of my guards, or of the army whomsoever, as well as of the governors of towns, places, and fortresses in Great Britain, Ireland, and the plantations, and of substituting commandants in their place till I have made known my will.

I think proper in like manner to reserve to myself all pardons in cases of High Treason, leaving to you the power of pardoning in all other cases, and of granting respites even in cases of High Treason.

If it should be necessary for the parliament to assemble during my absence, as the usual mode of passing bills allows time to ask my opinion and consent, it is my intention that you should not pass any public act without my approbation and express consent.

It is also my intention that no payment shall be ordered for secret service, bounty money or other things of that nature, beyond the sum of twenty thousand pounds sterling a year, (without however comprising what I have already ordered myself in these respects), as also that no augmentation should be made in the pensions in any of the offices beyond the present expence, without my express order.

I am perfectly persuaded that I might without the least risk confide to you the full and entire exercise of the powers above specified and reserved. But as I shall always be at hand, my opinion is that it would strengthen your administration to have my direction in affairs of such great importance, not doubting that you will acquiesce with pleasure in what I have determined, and the more because the powers which I re-

serve to myself, relate only to affairs which will not suffer by the short delay which will be necessary to receive my sentiments besides that the greater part of these powers are acts so immediate of the exercise of the sovereign authority, that they could not be delegated without degrading, in some respect, the dignity of the crown.

To this may be added a consideration which appears to me of great weight. It is that what I establish at present will be an example, from which a consequence will be drawn on the frequent occasions which will present themselves for the princes of our family to go and visit their states in Germany; so that if I had given to the powers I leave you all the extent which the confidence I have in you would permit, there might result from them in future cases great inconveniences to our posterity, and dangerous consequences for the crown of these kingdoms.

Done at St. James's, 5th July, 1716.

To my dearest Son,
the Prince of Wales.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Cabals of Sunderland and Cadogan with the duchess of Munster, who is angry at not being created an English duchess, to remove the ministers—Intrigues of Bernsdorf and Robethon—Sunderland makes professions of reconciliation and friendship—Walpole laments the uncertainty of their situation—Necessary to know whether the king will return time enough to summon the parliament—The prince anxious to hold it—Seems desirous to secure an interest independant of the king—Difficulty of managing both the king and prince—Duke of Argyle's frequent visits to Hampton Court—Directs in what manner he is to receive count Quirini—This secret correspondence only known to Townshend and Mr. Methuen, whom he highly applauds.

DEAR SIR; July 30—August 10, 1716.

ALTHO' you were very sensible how affairs stood among us here at your departure, and were acquainted with the heats and divisions betwixt the king's servants, yett we having pick'd up some particular accounts which may a little contribute to your better informations, I thought it not improper to write to you a little at large, that you may know in what situation we apprehend our matters stand at present.

We conceive then there is reason to believe that the designs of lord Sunderland, Cadogan, &c. were carried further, and better supported than we did imagine whilst you were here, and that all the foreigners were engaged on their side of the question; and in cheif that the duchesse of Munster enter'd into the dispute with a more than ordinary zeal and resentment against us, insomuch that by an account we have of a conversation with the king at the duchesse of Munster's, they flatter themselves that nothing but the want of time and the hurry the king was in upon his going away, prevented a thorough change of the mi-

nistry, which they still proposed to carry on upon the whig foot, exclusive of us, and by the account we have, there was no difficulty at all in removing me; you, it was thought might be taken care of in the army, but they were at a losse about my lord Townshend. That this was discours'd of there seems to be no room for doubt, how far the king gave into it is not sufficiently explain'd, or whether he was more than passive in hearing the conversation; but it seems to me so contradictory to the accounts I allways had of the king's behaviour to lord Townshend and you upon this subject, that I am at a losse how to question what is positively affirmed, or to believe what is so very extraordinary and irreconcilable with all other parts of the king's conduct, but now you are inform'd of this, I think you will be able to learn or guesse what foot we stand upon. That the duchesse of Munster was very angry at her not being an English duchesse is most certain, and that she imputes the whole to my lord Townshend, and has express'd a particular resentment against him; I fear old Bernsdorf has given into these matters more than we are willing to believe, but yett I cannot be persuaded that he had any thoughts of entering into their thorough scheme, which to me must appear impossible, when I recollect the discourse I had myself with him upon these topicks: Robethon's impertinence is so notorious, that we must depend upon it he does all the mischief he possible can; but if the heads can be sett right, such little creatures must come in in course, or may be despis'd.

Lord Sunderland talks of leaving England in a fortnight, and to be sure will not be long from you; he seems very pressing to have instructions from us how to behave at Hanover. His professions for an entire reconciliation and a perfect union are as strong as words can expresse; and you may be sure are reciprocall; and when I consider that common interest should procure sincerity among us, I am astonish'd to think there

is reason to fear the contrary. What to my conception is first and cheifly necessary is, the king's return, if practicable, which must determine these doubts one way or other, for nobody can answer for the successe of any thing, as long as nobody durst undertake, or knows he shall be supported in what is found necessary for carrying on the king's businesse. I find lord Sunderland and they persuade themselves the king will come back before the parliament sitts; the prince talks of nothing but holding the parliament. It were very materiall to us to know which will be the case, because I think a different management will be necessary according to this event, and such measures must be kept with the prince, if he is to hold the parliament, as may perhaps be misrepresented with you, and may be declin'd if the king comes over himself.

And now I have mentioned the prince, 'tis fitt you should know how it stands with him, which is in appearance much better than it was, and instead of pretty extraordinary treatment, we meet civill receptions. He seems very intent upon holding the parliament, very inquisitive about the revenue, calls daily for papers, which may tend to very particular informations; and I am not sure, they are not more for other people's perusall than his own. By some things that daily drop from him, he seems to be preparing to keep up an interest of his in parliament independent of the king's; but if that part is to be acted, I hope 'tis not impossible to bring him into other and better measures, but for this I do not pretend to answer. As for our behaviour to his highnesse we take care not to be wanting in duty and respect, not to give any offence or handle to such as are ready to take any opportunity to render businesse impracticable, and we hope we demean ourselves so, that neither they who would misrepresent us to the king for making our court too much to the prince, nor they who would hurt us with the prince for doing it too little, can have any fair advantage over

us, but this is a game not to be manag'd without difficulty. Lord Townshend goes to-morrow to live at Hampton Court, I shall go twice a week, and on those publick days we both shall keep tables. This is a burthen not to be avoided, and what is expected from us, since 'twas determined that neither king nor prince would keep a green cloth table, and the white staffs are generally gone to their respective homes except lord Steward. The duke of Argyle comes constantly to court, appears in publick and has his private audiences, and not without influence.

Count Quirini has lately had some conferences with lord Townshend and self, he has made great tenders of his good officers at Hanover, and given the strongest assurances of his friendship; we have engaged him and obliged him enough to meritt his service if he can render any: he will apply to you as a friend and confident, and you must receive him as such, but take care not to trust him, nor make any other use of him, than to learn what you can from him.

This correspondence is a secrett to all the world except lord Townshend and Mr. Mettwyn. He is acquainted with every step we take, and has indeed entered into businesse with us with so much friendship and honour, that we are in the same confidence and intimacy with him, as we were with you: what comes from Mr. Poyntz you are in all respects to treat as from ourselves, and 'tis desired your private letter may for the future be directed to him; this saves the trouble of denying and chicaning about the correspondence both to and from you; and I promise you 'tis necessary to say every post something that shall look like truth upon the subject of the private correspondence. I am ever dear Don, &c.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Harrington Papers.]

Tories are well received by the prince—Reports circulated that the prince hates the ministers in England, and that they are displeasing to the king—Necessary to ascertain the truth or falsity of these accounts—The duke of Argyle endeavours to gain over some of the discontented whigs.

August 7—18, 1716.

BY a letter I wrote to you some time since, I gave you the best account I then could of the state of our affairs. What I have now to add from the occurrences that have since happened is to tell you, that not only the duke of Argyle and lord Ilay, &c. but duke of Shrewsbury, Dick Hill, lord Rochester, and their wives and other tories are constant attendants at Hampton Court. They generally choose to come on the private days; but their reception gives great offence to all well wishers, and I assure you, does not a little animate the tories, who generally, I mean such as are near the town, resort to court, and meet all possible encouragement to go on so. I cannot but say, the prince is civill to us, but that is all that I can say, which is now so well known and understood, that the tories take great pains to publish it; that the prince hates us, and at the same time that we are almost lost with the king, having all the foreigners determined against us. This is the situation which the world looks upon us to be in, which, if be true, as far as relates to your side of the water, it is very desireable that we should know it, to take our measures accordingly; and if is not true, I am sure it is absolutely necessary that some method should be found out to make the contrary known, for no man

can serve in this nation, whose creditt with the prince is supposed to be lost or declining.

We have very good accounts that the duke of Argyle and his creatures are endeavouring to engage particular persons against next sessions. I think it cannot be doubted from the reception the tories meet at court that there is an understanding betwixt him and them, tho' the persons he particularly applies to are whigs that he apprehends are disgusted.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Mentions the motives and impropriety of the addresses to the prince—Sunderland in taking leave gives strong assurances of friendship—The prince eager to settle the business for the next session—Artifices employed to delay it—Cabals seem to be in agitation—on the duke of Argyle's pension—The prince disposed to be more complying—Is prevailed upon, though with difficulty, to give a proper answer to the Glocestershire address.

DEAR SIR; Aug. 30—Sept. 10, 1716.

SINCE I troubled you last, you had an account by another hand of the apprehensions we had of addresses, that were sett on foot in severall parts of the kingdom, which we heard no more of till yesterday, that Giles Erle (the duke of Argyle's Erle) that sold to'ther day, brought an addresse to Mr. Methwyn from Gloucestershire. The addresse is to the prince and contains nothing in it that is very liable to objection; but Mr. Erle having no concern in that country, Mr. Methwyn told him, if any gentleman that was thought proper to deliver it, should desire it of him, he would not refuse to introduce him, which was all he could do. Mr. Erle then left the addresse with him, but upon second thoughts came for it again in the afternoon, and said

he would deliver it himself. It is observable tho' there is nothing very materiall in this addresse, it comes from the county where an addresse of another spiritt was refus'd; and it seems, since they could not have such a one as they wish'd, they would rather have such a one as the whigs would sign, and could not be objected to, than have none at all, and this is certainly meant as a forerunner to others that are ready prepar'd, and will be of that stile which you were before acquainted with. We have reason to believe there are some more in other countries ready to be sent up, which may be in themselves not very significant, but only to introduce the humour of addressing, which when begun, if it meets with encouragement, you may depend upon it, will be followed in such a manner, as to complement the prince at the expence of the king and his servants, for this was most certainly the first design, and can be of no other use. The tories are waiting for the event, and flatter themselves with no small advantage from it. Lord Sunderland has left us, and will be soon with you; we parted with all the professions and assurances of mutual friendship and union, that was possible. He seem'd indeed sensible of the ill consequences of the measures he had been engag'd in, and seem'd resolved to return again to his senses, and do his best endeavours to sett things right again, when he had sett them wrong.

The prince appears to us easy and in good humour, but is very pressing to have the scheme of the next session fix'd and agreed upon and laid before him: you may be sure we use all the methods and artifices we can for delay and to gain time, in hopes to hear from you that his highnesse may probably be eas'd of this trouble. There is begun a round of dinners, the first was at lord Uxbridge's house in Middlesex, the second at lord Orrery's in that neighbourhood: we are told it is to go on, the company, these two lords, duke of Shrewsbury, duke of Argyle, lord Carlton, lord Rochester, Dick

Hill, lord Windsor. They have all country houses at about fifteen miles distance, and are frequent attenders at court, and seem to think they have such a prospect as requires and may encourage caballing. I should have acquainted you before, that it being necessary in point of form to passe a patent to revoke the duke of Argyle's patent for his pension of 2,000*l.* per annum, I did present to the prince a warrant for this purpose, which his highnesse did refuse to sign; that the pension in law stands still good, but no money will be paid upon it without our direction, which you may be sure will not be had; that I dont know whether you will think proper to mention this to the king, since it can have no consequences before his return, but if his majesty is acquainted with it; which probably should not be omitted, we are of opinion, it will be adviseable not to send any orders about it, for fear of disturbing the prince, who now seems disposed to be easy.

Since I wrote the first part of this, the Gloucestershire adoresse has been deliver'd, which his highnesse was prevailed upon to receive in the best manner that could be wish'd. He told Mr. Erle that presented it, he was obliged to the gentlemen for their zeal and attention, but desired he would lett them know, that it was more agreeable to him to have all things of this nature addressed to the king. It cost some pains to bring his highnesse to this temper, and will be a great disappointment to the managers of this affair. It is worth notice that Mr. Lechmere was the penman of this addresse. Lord Townshend gives you an account of this in his publick dispatch, and begs you will give such a turn to it in your answer, as may please and encourage the prince in this instance of his duty and regard to the king. The prince talks of going in ten days to Portsmouth. The route is to lord Dorsett's in Kent, from thence to the speaker's in Sussex, and returns back by lord Scarborough's.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Enforces the necessity of the king's presence; but if he continues abroad, recommends the propriety of not deferring too long the opening of the session, which would disgust the prince—Flourishing state of the revenue and public credit—Is preparing a scheme for paying off the debt—Conference with Bothmar on the sale of the lands in the island of St. Christopher's—Dissuades the king from appropriating the purchase money, and recommends another mode of proceeding.

DEAR SIR; London, Sept. 28—October 9, 1716.

I HAVE received the favour of yours of the 19th instant, and am very glad to hear, that our endeavours to render his majesty the best service we are able is graciously accepted by him; and 'tis a further satisfaction for us to find that tho' we have no easy game to play here, we are not entirely unsuccessfull; and altho' it may be possible still to carry on the king's businesse here with a constant assiduity, application, and carefull management, I must confesse I was infinitely pleas'd with that part of the letter which gave us hopes of his majesties coming over to hold the parliament himself. But I cannot but be concern'd at your apprehensions upon this point express'd in your letter to Mr. Poyntz; but in this case next to the want of the king's presence, to be kept in doubt and suspence will be the greatest misfortune.

I have gott the prince's leave to goe into the country for a month, to try if I can lay in a little stock of health, to enable me to undergoe the winter's campaign, and as I may not be in the way to give you my thoughts very suddenly again, I shall take the liberty to tell you my sense very plainly. If 'tis possible to prevail with the king to come over, no endeavours should be wanting to convince his majesty, that its of the last conse-

quence to his affairs, and indeed allmost of such absolute necessity, that nobody dares to answer for successe in this businesse in parliament in his majesties absence; so that if there is any hopes of the king's coming over, I think it adviseable to defer the meeting of the parliament as long as 'tis possible, which I think may be done till after Christmas. But, on the other hand, if his majesty is determin'd to suffer the prince to hold the parliament, I am of opinion, there should be no thoughts of deferring the sessions any longer than the latter end of November or beginning of December at furthest. For besides the generall inconveniencies of a late session, and the particular prejudices that the public suffers in our mony matters, you may depend upon it, the prince will soon grow uneasy; and if he once begins to think, that the session is delayed only to defeat him of what he so much desires, this will be imputed entirely to us; and if he at last holds the parliament, his resentment upon this account, may give those that desire to confound the king's affairs such an advantage over us, that we shall feel the effects of it thro' the whole session; that 'tis plain to me, if the king designs the prince shall hold the parliament, and will thereby putt the whole affairs of this winter into his highnesse's hands and power, it should be done in such a manner as may not engage the prince in measures opposite to the interest of the king. It is easy to see of what use and service it will be, for the king's servants to know his majesties resolutions upon this head as soon as may be, that they may begin to form the scheme of the session, and take his majesties pleasure upon the severall heads, before they are finally fixed and determin'd with the prince.

The state of his majesties revenue being at present in so good a condition, I hope you will excuse me that I give you the trouble of acquainting you in generall, that the supplies of this year have been so order'd, that altho' there was a deficiency of above 600,000*l.*, we

shall be able to carry on the subsistence of the army, and all services of the navy that are of absolute necessity till after Christmas, which is chiefly done by postponing the payments of the clearings and off-reckonings, to be made good out of the supplies of next year, and was thus order'd out of a view of delaying the session if it should be found necessary. The branches of the king's civill list have answer'd these last four months beyond all expectations, that the whole civill list upon every branch of it is now clear'd and paid to Lady Day last, and we have at present in the Exchequer of his majesty's civill list mony about 80,000*l.* towards answering the Midsummer quarter, which is a better condition than the civill list has been in for many years, and indeed ever since I had the least knowledge or insight into businesse. The aggregate fund settled for the bank for the additional 120,000*l.* per annum, for the civill list and for the bank annuities at 5*l.* per cent., which scarce produc'd any thing for the first six months has now made itself good, and we have paid one whole year due to each head at this Michaelmas, with a surplus of about 4,000*l.* for the growing quarter. The public prints will tell you in what a flourishing condition our credit is, and how high all stocks now are. Give me leave to be so vain as to inform you, that we have not given above 4*l.* per cent. interest upon any of our land or malt tallies, altho' the parliament allowed us 6*l.* per cent. which liberty alone has enabled us to make this saving, that will in the year amount to above 40,000*l.*, and so the event has made good my conceit, that seem'd a paradox, that six was lesse than five.

I am now very busy in projecting and forming a scheme for paying the debts of the nation; and I do not despair of being able to propose what shall be effectuall for this purpose, in case all things remain quiett, and we have no disturbance nor alarms from abroad.

Count Bothmar upon the receit of the last pacquetts desired a conference with me, which was upon the subject of the lands of St. Christopher's yielded to the crown of England by the last treaty of peace with France. He used in his whole discourse the king's name, and said his majesty had by the two last posts sent him orders to receive proposalls concerning the disposition of these lands, which he thought proper to consult me about; and desired I would tell him expressly what answer I thought fit to return to the king. It is not possible to give you in the compasse of a letter the substance of so long a conversation; but when I tell you my thoughts and sense of this matter, you will easily judge what must be the tenour and cheif of our discourse. I do apprehend, that St. Christopher's being a cession to England upon the peace, it will be thought, and some time or other declar'd so in parliament, that it being purchas'd by the blood and treasure of the publick, the nation ought to have the benefitt and advantage of it. This I speak; as the language of such, as will be dispos'd to find fault, and what will perhaps be too much attended to by even the well-meaning country gentlemen. There is no doubt but 'tis in the power of the king to sell or dispose of it, as he shall think fitt; that the only question is about the manner, and the application of the money. I have had this summer two or three different proposalls offer'd to me, which I have allways declined entering into, because I did not know the king's sense and pleasure about it. The highest sum that has been ever yett mention'd to me, was 70,000*l.* I cannot say that more will be given, but it so seldom happens, that the highest price is bid at first, that I make no doubt but the case would be the same here likewise. I understand by count Bothmar, that the king is pretty much determin'd to have the whole produce at his own will and private direction, and what is suggested, to bring this matter immediately into a transaction, is the danger there may

be, that the parliament may by some act, or vote, lay their hands upon it, and prevent the king's intentions, as was done in the case of the Farthings. I can only say to this, that whoever should think of meddling with this previously to any thing being done upon it, would sooner fall upon it after it was done in such a manner, as they might apprehend will give a handle to fix a blame or censure upon the king's servants; for I have always observ'd that the love of finding fault is at least as prevalent in our house, as the desire of doing the publick good; and I believe Mr. Lechmere would be more forward in fixing a censure upon your humble servant, that in saving such a sum to the publick. Upon the whole, if his majesty is very intent, that something should be done in this matter, I humbly hope, he will give leave that it may be consider'd in the best manner that is possible; and if he is very desirous to take the benefitt of it to himself, I hope his majesty will be so good as to forgive me, if I give it as my humble opinion, that the surest, and most effectual way to secure such a share or part of it as shall be thought reasonable to his own private disposall, will be by permitting, that a greater part of it should be applied to some use that will appear to be a publick concern, which will still be so entirely under his majesty's direction, that if it is his majesty's pleasure, a reasonable advantage may be in his majesty's power, without any clamour or complaint, which I am afraid will never otherways be avoided. Suppose, for instance, if a plan should be prepar'd for re-building Whitehall, which I think has been before mention'd to his majesty, and part of this be declared as the foundation of that publick work, it would stop the mouths of all reasonable men, and I think it would be possible afterwards to give such a turn to this affair that what should be applied to his majesty's private use might be so order'd as to have the appearance of a saving to the publick. I thought it proper to give you a general view

of my conceptions in this affair, that you may learn what it is the king expects, and in relation to the apprehensions of the parliament's being before-hand with us, I will only add one thing, that whenever St. Christopher's comes to be sold, it is not to be suppos'd, but the purchasers will require a considerable time for making the payments of so large a sum, that by the nature of the thing this will be publicly known, before any considerable part of the money will be paid in, and upon such notice; 'tis more probable the parliament will call for an account of it, than whilst it lies asleep, and an addresse of the house of commons will as effectually reach it, if at all, after the contract is made, as before. When I have said this, I hope if any thing happens in parliament upon this subject, contrary to his majesty's wishes, it will not be imputed to me; for I must observe to you there being several persons who have this matter in their view, with a prospect of private advantage, it is to be expected, that the disappointed will find ways to bring this upon the stage, whenever any agreement is made with others.

I send you herewith the warrant for lord Manchester's office, for his majesty's hand, as likewise the grant to lady Mar, &c. pursuant to the power given to his majesty by act of parliament. I believe I have by this time sufficiently tired you, but I write now for a month. Pray believe me, dear Don, with all possible sincerity and friendship, your's for ever, &c.

LORD TOWNSHEND TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Orford and Harrington Papers.]

Justifies the conduct of Walpole in not venturing to appropriate any sum for the payment of the German troops—Expresses his concern that both himself and Walpole are exposed to evil suggestions—Mentions their services, and hints at his resignation—Boasts of the good effects which already result from the alliance with France—Objects to the prosecution of the contest with Russia—Is of opinion that the parliament will never approve it—Imputes Bothmar's malicious insinuations to the rage of disappointed avarice.

(Private.)

SIR; Hampton Court, Tuesday, October 16—27, 1716.

I HAVE received the favour of your private letter of the 16th inst. N. S. and am sorry to find his majesty should have spoken to you with some warmth concerning the payment of the Munster and Saxe Gotha troops. My brother Walpole is at present in Norfolk, so that I cannot send you his thoughts as to the practicableness of finding some expedient for paying those troops before a parliamentary provision is made for them; but being able to charge my own memory with the particular circumstances which have hitherto hindered that payment, I must beg leave to give you a short deduction of that matter, leaving it to you to trouble his majesty with as much or as little of it as you shall think proper.

You must, I am persuaded, remember as well as I, that upon the pretender's landing in Scotland, no one imagining he would have engaged in such an undertaking without foreign assistance, the parliament gave the king unlimited power to raise what number of men he should think fitt for the defence of the kingdom, and farther the lords of the Cabinet Council, his majesty being present, did unanimously advise and desire him to secure and take into his service a body of troops from abroad, and orders were accordingly given to the

king's German ministers to hire the troops above-mentioned. The precipitate retreat of the pretender having afterwards made it unnecessary for his majesty to increase the number of troops within the kingdom was as intended, and it being thereupon judged adviseable for his majesty to mention to the parliament this instance of the good use made of the trust reposed in him, it was thought very inconsistent after such a step to retain a body of foreign forces in pay; accordingly orders were given for stopping the conventions with Munster and Saxe-Gotha, in case they were not finally concluded. But those orders coming too late, it happened that the treaties were (according to the report of Messrs. Bernsdorf and Bothmar) actually signed; however we were assured that in consideration of the troops not being made use of, endeavours should be used to gett a new convention, by which part of the charge should be mitigated, which convention I am told has since been perfected. These first treaties did not come over till late in the session, while my brother Walpole lay so ill that his life was despaired of, and as soon as ever he recovered, Messrs. Bernsdorf and Bothmar and I had a conference with him about settling this affair in order to the laying the said treaties before the parliament that the necessary provision might be made for this service. But upon perusal of the papers brought us by Messrs. Bernsdorf and Bothmar we found they were only copys of the treaties, and that the originals were not sent over. This made it impracticable to have them laid before the house of commons, to whom either the original conventions or authentick copies attested by one of the secretaries of state must always be produced; besides which, one of these conventions was drawn in such loose terms as seem'd to imply that if the troops were not demanded within a certain time, the agreement was void, which however Messrs. Bernsdorf and Bothmar assured us was not the intent and meaning of it. For these reasons it was judged im-

proper to bring this matter before the parliament at that time for fear the want of an authentick instrument, and the loose wording of the treaty should have given a handle for putting a negative on this demand, and thereby have precluded us from ever bringing it into the house again; and it was agreed to defer moving that matter till the new conventions could be finished, and authentick acts of them be got ready to lay before the parliament, which conventions were not perfected and sent hither till since the end of the session. So that the soonest this money can be paid in a regular way will be some time after the opening of the next session; but if it is the king's pleasure some extraordinary method should be found out for furnishing this summ immediately, I own freely to you, were I in Mr. Walpole's case, I should expect his majesty's commands for laying that matter at least before the Cabinet Council; it being in my opinion too great a weight for Mr. Walpole to take upon himself.

In the mean time it is a very melancholy reflection, that our best endeavours for his majesty's service are liable to be thus interpreted; and I am sorry I have this occasion to be confirmed in my opinion, that no services which Mr. Walpole, or you, or I, can ever render to his majesty, will be sufficient to screen and support us against the false and malicious suggestions of our enemies. The success with which our endeavours have hitherto been crowned is such, as it would look like vanity even to mention, and since the only aim of my ambition and the reward of all my labours is now attained by seeing his majesty firmly seated in the throne; I can struggle no longer against the difficulties which our enemies about the king create us every day, and shall therefore most earnestly beg leave to resign my employment and to retire into the country as soon as the king returns, and his majesty may depend upon my not behaving myself in the manner others have done after quitting his service. But I shall, I hope,

by the steadiness of my conduct, and by doing the duty's of a good subject in a private station, efface those ill impressions which have been given him of me.

The good effects which already begin to appear from the prospect of a treaty with France will, I hope, convince every body, that I was not mistaken in my notions with regard to that alliance; the present situation of his majesty's affairs here being more prosperous than the most sanguine of his servants could have expected or imagined, and the public credit is higher than ever was known. By which means an opportunity may certainly be taken in parliament this winter of reducing all public interest to 5 per cent. whereby a fund will be gained out of the present interest of near 800,000*l.* per ann. towards sinking the debt, which summ well managed will in a small number of years clear all we owe; and this may be done without the least breach of faith or publick credit, or burthening the people with any new tax, provided nothing intervenes that may bring a disreputation on his majesty's administration, or that shall look like engaging the nation in a new war.

The miserable and distracted condition into which the northern affairs are plunged gives the discontented and enemies of the king's government hopes, that they may be able to raise some disturbances in parliament on that head, which they flatter themselves may be managed so as to affect the king's affairs in general; and indeed I cannot but own their expectations in this particular to be better founded and their schemes more wisely laid than they use to be. You will see by the intercepted letters the part count Gillenberg is to take in this scene; Mr. Lechmere and some other whigs, as I am credibly informed, are to take their share; and your humble servant, and yourself, are personally to suffer in this attack, *tho' God knows we have had no direction in all this northern quarrell.* However be that as it will, whilst we carry a musket, we must do our duty without

murmur or complaint; and that we may do it in the best manner for the king's service, I must beg leave to say a word or two to you upon that part of your letter, where you say you do not think it impossible even to set this northern business in such a light, as may induce the parliament not to look on it with indifference; and you alledge the expence England was in at Cromwell's time, in fitting out a fleet for preserving the balance of the north.

I perfectly agree with you, that England as well as the rest of Europe, ever had and always must have a great interest in the preservation of the ballance of the north, and yet I cannot help being of opinion, that if the northern affairs were brought into parliament by his majesty's order upon the foot they now stand, his majesty would be so far from obtaining any assistance on that head, that there would be great danger from such a step of ruining his credit and influence in both houses. The arguments for maintaining a ballance in the north will be turned against all that has been doing ever since the siege of Stralsund; and they will tell us, I fear, that had the intended descent succeeded in the way, and with the troops designed for that expedition, the balance of the north had been effectually ruined, and the czar made master of all the trade of the Baltic. And I do not remember that I ever was furnished with any other answers to what may be said on this subject, among all the wise reasonings you and I have heard, but that the czar's son is a mere Muscovite, and is to ruin all his father has done in a very little while after the czar's death, who to make the scheme a little more tolerable was also supposed to be in a very languishing condition. But the scene being since a great deal changed, I suppose by supporting the balance of the north, it is now meant, both against the czar and Sweden; and I doubt very much whether any scheme of that kind can be displayed in such

colours as to invite the parliament to engage in it. For besides the difficulties our trade must lye under, should we actually break with the czar, the expence necessary to support such a scheme will be an insuperable reason with the parliament never to come into it. The expecting therefore any money from the parliament towards carrying on that war is a mere delusion, and can end in nothing but breaking the king's friends amongst themselves, ruining the publick credit, and preventing us from getting into a method of paying the nation's debts. Could indeed the States and the regent or court of Vienna be prevailed upon to form in concert with his majesty a plan or project of a peace for the north, and at the same time to enter into measures with his majesty to force the contending parties to accept of the terms so offered, the parliament might upon such a foundation give something towards enabling the king to pay his proportion of the expence; but the States have hitherto been so averse from meddling in those affairs, that I fear there is little hopes of their engaging in them at present.

I find all the king's servants here of opinion that the most we can expect from the parliament this session is two shillings in the pound, and the malt, which together make one million and a half; with this, allowing for 10,000 seamen, we may I believe keep near 20,000 land forces, so that you see upon this foot the utmost assistance that is to be expected from hence as to the affairs of the north, is a squadron of ships. I am, &c.

P. S. I am very sure that all these malicious insinuations to Walpole's and our prejudice arise from Bothmar, who has every day some infamous project or other on foot to get money; and his disappointments in these particulars are what he cannot bear, having nothing in his view but raising a vast estate to himself; and therefore he will never be satisfied till he

has got the Ministry and Treasury into such hands as will satiate his avarice, at the expence of the king's credit, interest, and service.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Expresses his surprise and regret at incurring blame for his conduct—Justifies himself—Denies that he gave any promise to the king in regard to the payment of the German troops—States the inconveniences, should parliament meet later than the end of January.

DEAR SIR; London, Nov. 11—22, 1716.

AT my return from the country, lord Townshend communicated to me the contents of both your letters, which so nearly concern me, as every thing must needs do that gives me reason to believe I suffer in his majestie's good opinion. There can be no greater misfortune, than to incur blame and displeasure for those very things which a man thinks he has deserv'd well in; but this seems to be the fate of those who have the honour to serve at a distance. As to the businesse of St. Christopher's, I am sure I have done nothing in it yett, wherein 'tis possible for me to offend; and I have already wrote to you my sentiments so fully, that I can say no more upon it, unlesse in a conference which count Bothmar has desired with me on Tuesday morning, something shall occur that I may think proper to give you an account of; and I must beg leave to defer entering into any particulars relating to the payment of the troops of Saxe-Gotha and Munster, till after that time, because I am sure count Bothmar dares not deny to me, but that I have shew'd a more

than ordinary readiness to facilitate that matter; and this I am confident I shall be able to tell you, he has confess'd to me. I must only add one thing, that I am at a losse what to say, when I am told, I promised the king a method should be found out to pay this money. I do not presume to enter into this dispute, but I hope I shall be thought more excusable, when I protest before God, that I cannot recollect that ever the king mention'd one syllable of this to me, or I to him; but my memory must fail me, when his majesty says the contrary.

By your letter to lord Townshend, received this day, I understand 'tis his majesty's pleasure that the parliament should not meet before the eighth of January. I think it my duty to suggest to you, that 'tis to be remember'd, that the parliament left last year above six hundred thousand pounds of the supply unrais'd; notwithstanding which, it has been so order'd, that we shall be able to subsist the forces till the latter end of January, by throwing the deficiency upon such parts of the service as were best able to bear it, but this not without great inconveniencies; and if his majesty should have any thoughts of a further prorogation, I beg this may be consider'd, and we may timely know, what is to be expected, that all possible care be taken; tho' I am sensible, it must be done with the greatest difficulty, if at all practicable; and the methods we shall be obliged to take, will in some measure, I fear, affect our creditt, which at this time proves very unfortunate. I am, &c.

SECRETARY STANHOPE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Harrington Papers.]

Informs him of lord Townshend's removal, and justifies his own conduct on the occasion—King very uneasy of late, and highly displeased with lord Townshend—Plan for a new ministry, if lord Townshend should refuse the lord lieutenancy, and Walpole resign.

DEAR SIR; Hanover Dec. 15, 1716.

YOU will see by my dispatch to Mr. secretary Methuen, of which I send you enclosed a copy, the alteration which his majesty hath judged necessary, for his service to be made in the ministry. If I could possibly have an hours discourse with you, I am sure I should make you sensible, that the part I have had in the last step hath been for my lord Townshend's service. Every circumstance considered, I do in my conscience believe, this was the only measure which could secure the continuance of a whigg administration with any ease to the king. His majesty hath been more uneasy of late, than I care to say; and I must own, I think he has reason, even tho' I don't pretend to know so much of the matter as the king does; his majesty receiving many advices, which come neither through my hands nor my lord Sunderland's. But I cannot help observing to you, that he is jealous of certain intimacys with the two brothers. I hope his majesty's presence in England, and the behaviour of our friends in the cabinet, will remove these jealousyes. No one man can contribute more to this than yourself; and I must tell you, that my lord Sunderland, as well as myself, have assured the king that you will do so. You know that ill offices had been done you here, which might have made some impression, if my lord Sunderland and I had not in good earnest endeavoured to prevent it.

You will, I am persuaded, believe that our endeavours were sincere, when I shall have told you with the frankness I am going to do, what our scheme is here for the ministry. In case my lord Townshend accepts of Ireland, which for a thousand reasons, he ought to do, the cabinet council will remain just as it was, with the addition of the duke of Kingston as privy seal. Mr. Methuen and I shall continue secretaryes. But if my lord Townshend shall decline Ireland; and if, which by some has been suggested, but which I cannot think possible, he should prevail upon you to offer to quit your employments, the king in this case, hath engag'd my lord Sunderland and myself to promise, that his lordship will be secretary; and that I, unable and unequal as I am every way, should be chancellour of the exchequer for this sessions; the king declaring, that as long as he can find whiggs that will serve him, he will be served by them. Which good disposition his majesty shall not have reason to alter, by any backwardness in me to expose myself to any trouble or hazard. You know as much of our plan now, as I do, and are, I dare say, fully satisfied, that I think it highly concerns me, that you should stay where you are. I am very sorry that my lord Townshend's temper hath made it impracticable for him to continue secretary. The king will not bear him in that office, be the consequence what it will. This being the case, I hope and desire that you will endeavour to reconcile him to Ireland, which I once thought he did not dislike; and which, I think, he cannot now refuse, without declaring to the world, that he will serve upon no other terms, than being viceroy over father, son, and their three kingdoms. Is the whigg interest to be staked in defence of such a pretension? or is the difference to the whigg party, whither lord Townshend be secretary or lord lieutenant of Ireland tanti? I hope this letter will convince you of the confidence in which I desire we may live and act; and am ever with great truth, &c.

The present dispatch leaves, you see, a commissioners place vacant at your board, touching the filling up which, I should be glad to have your sentiments as soon as may be. I believe the king will leave Hanover as soon as he has advice, that the yachts are in Holland. Judging that it may be very much for my lord Townshend's service and for yours, that you should receive this letter as soon as may be, I send it by your friend Brereton, who is a very sensible young man, and I have ordered him to manage it so, that this letter be delivered to you four and twenty hours, before the messenger who goes along with him, deliver my dispatch to Mr. secretary Methuen, that you may have so much time to reason with my lord Townshend.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Harrington Papers.]

Expostulates on his conduct—Justifies lord Townshend's and his own conduct in regard to their behaviour to the prince of Wales—Denies any secret intelligence with the duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay.

DEAR SIR; Dec. 12—23, 1716.

YOUR private letter to me, I have not let one mortal see. I never read it, but some parts of it astonish me so much, that I know not what to say or think. What could prevail on you to enter into such a scheme as this, and appear to be chief actor in it, and undertake to carry it thro' in all events, without which it could not have been undertaken, is unaccountable. I do swear to you, that lord Townshend has no way deserved it of you; and even after the letter that came with the king's, I do protest to you, he never treated your conduct in that matter, but as a

mistake; which, when you were sensible of, your friendship for him would easily prevail upon you to retract. Believe me, Stanhope, he never thought you could enter into a combination with his enemies against him.

I find you are all persuaded, the scheme is so adjusted, that it can meet with no objection from the whigs. Believe me, you will find the direct contrary true with every unprejudiced whig of any consequence or consideration. I, perhaps, am too nearly concerned in the consequences to gain any creditt with you. However, I can't help telling you, you don't know what you are a doing. 'Tis very hard to treat my lord Townshend in the manner you have done, but 'tis more unjust to load him with imputations to justifie such ill treatment. Such sudden changes to old sworn friends, are seldom look'd upon in the world with a favourable eye. What is given out here and publish'd, from letters from among you, in regard to the prince, I cannot but take notice of, and will stake my all upon this single issue, if one instance can be given of our behaviour to the prince, but what was necessary to carry on the king's service; and we never had a thought, but with a just and due regard to the king as our king and master; and as for any secret intimacies or management undertaken with the two brothers, if there be the least handle, or one instance can be given of it, call me for ever *villain;* if not, think as you please of those that say or write this.

I will say no more, but give you one piece of advice. Stop your hand till you come over, and can see and hear how that you have already done is resented here. I am very sensible in what a manner lord Townshend's refusall may be represented to the king. Think a little coolly, and consider how possible it is for men in a passion to do things, which they may heartily wish undone. I write this as an old acquaintance, that still desires to live in as much friendship as you will make

it possible or practicable for me. And lett me once more beg of you to recollect yourself, and lay aside that passion, which seems to be so predominant in all your actions. I have heard old friends were to be valued like old gold. I never wish'd any thing more sincerely than to bear that title, and to preserve it with you.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Harrington Papers.]

Reproaches him for his change of sentiments—Exculpates himself in regard to the payment of the German troops—Declines attempting to persuade lord Townshend to accept the lord lieutenancy—Denies that he carried on any intrigues with the duke of Argyle and lord Ilay.

Dec. 12—23, 1716.

I HAVE received the favour of yours of the 3d instant, N. S. by my brother, and very soon after had what you sent by Mr. Brereton of the 15th. What could possibly create so great an alteration among you in the space of twelve days is in vain to guesse, and impossible to determine. But I suppose I am mistaken, when I think there was any change in the measures, except in the time of execution. I think I have no commands at present from his majesty to you, but in relation to the payment of the Saxe-Gotha and Munster troops, which I hope will be no longer thought to stand at my door: since after all that has been said about this affair, there are at this hour no powers from Saxe-Gotha to receive the mony; and as M. Hallangius tells me, his master will give no powers but to him; and count Bothmar tells me this morning, what was agreed upon betwixt us to be sent from your side of the water, in order to be laid before the cabinett

councill, is come so imperfect, that 'tis not fitt to be produced. He has desired, however, that six or seven thousand pounds may be paid upon account of the troops of Munster, which shall be laid before the cabinett councill at their first meeting.

When you desired me to prevail with my lord Townshend to acquiesce in what is carv'd out for him, I cannot but say you desired an impossibility; and 'tis fitt you should know, that there is not one of the cabinett councill, with whom you and lord Sunderland have agreed in all things for so many years, but think, that considering all the circumstances and manner of doing this, no body could advise him to accept of the lieutenancy of Ireland: and that it cannot be supposed, that the authors of this scheme either thought he would, or desired he should. And believe me, when I tell you, this matter is universally received here by all men of sense, and well wishers to the king, in another manner than you could imagine, when you gave into the measure. And be assured, that whoever sent over the accounts of any intrigues or private correspondence betwixt us and the two * brothers, or any management in the least tending to any view or purpose, but the service, honour, and interest of the king, I must repeat it, be assured, they will be found, pardon the expression, confounded liars, from the beginning to the end.

Whilst we write at this distance, and think so widely different of all things transacting, 'tis labour lost to enlarge; so that I will give you no further trouble till we meet, but to assure you, that I am very sincerely, dear sir, your most faithful humble servant.

* The duke of Argyle and the earl of Ilay.

1717.

SECRETARY STANHOPE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Harrington Papers.]

Complains that his conduct has been misapprehended—Desires him to use his influence with lord Townshend to accept the lord lieutenancy of Ireland—Justifies his own conduct.

(Draught.)

DEAR SIR; Hanover, Jan. 1, 1717.

I HAVE received the favour of your two letters of the 12th of December, and am very sorry to find, that what I judged and meant as a service to my lord Townshend, is resented in the manner it is. I delivered my lord Townshend's letter to the king; and instead of representing his lordship's refusal to his prejudice, I have procured his majesty's commands to repeat this offer to his lordship, and I rather choose to mention it to you, than to write directly to his lordship as yet. In the mean time I am commanded to acquaint you, that Ireland will be kept open till the king comes to England, and I cannot help telling you, that I think you cannot do your king, your country, and my lord Townshend a more signal service, than by prevailing with his lordship to accept of it. If you can suggest to me any method by which it may still more plainly and evidently appear, that the king's intention and desire was, that he should be lord lieutenant of Ireland I shall be obliged to you, and will certainly convince you, that you have judged hardly of your humble servant, in supposing it was not meant so. I do not write to my lord, because I fear, that any thing which comes from me, at this time, will only irritate. But I do pray you to communicate to him, what I have in command from his majesty, in relation to this business.

I have as just a value for old friends as is possible, and I cannot, I confess, discover that I have been guilty of a breach of friendship, in procuring the offer of Ireland, at a time when the king was determined he should not be secretary.

I wish it had been as easy for me to have got ridd of my office of secretary, as I will venture to affirm, it was impossible to have kept lord Townshend so. Ought I, either in my own name or in the name of the whiggish party, to have told the king, that my lord Townshend must continue to be secretary of state, or that I, nor any other of our friends, would have any thing to do. I really have not yet learnt to speak such language to my master; and I think a king is very unhappy, if he is the only man in the nation, who cannot challenge any friendship from those of his subjects, whom he thinks fit to employ. I think more is not required from a man in behalf of his friend, than in behalf of himself. And I can assure you, that it would be impossible for me to bring myself to tell the king, I won't serve him, unless he give me just the employment which I like best, tho' at the same time he either gives or continues to me an employment much more honourable and beneficial than that which I had a fancy for. You alarm me, and I fear with too much truth, with the consequences of this step, which may prove very fatal, and create a division amongst the whiggs. But pray, at whose door must this resentment be laid? I hope that you will grow cooler on your side; that even my lord Townshend will sacrifice his resentment to the public good. And I would then gladly know what cause or colour of uneasiness there can be to any honest man. I heartily wish you may well consider all circumstances, and promote that union amongst well meaning men, which is necessary. No one man in the world can do so much good as yourself; and give me leave to say, no one man will, I think, have more to answer for to his country, if you do not heartily endeavour to make up

these breaches. That I have never been wanting in any kind of friendly office to you, I am perfectly conscious to myself; and I am sure, that my interest as well as inclination lead me to wish the continuance of a friendship I ever valued. Pray excuse me to your brother Horace, to whom I am sincerely a well wisher, though he be very angry with me. I am, &c.

SECRETARY STANHOPE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Harrington Papers.]

Denies that any other removal is intended—Hopes that he will have no thoughts of quitting his place in the treasury, and trusts that their friendship will continue.

(Draught.)

DEAR SIR; Hanover, Jan. 3, 1716—1717.

HAVING sent by last post an answer to your letters of the 12th instant; this serves chiefly to cover a duplicate of the same letter which goes by a messenger for fear of accidents. Upon reading over your letters again, I wonder what could induce you to make use of one expression. You caution us to stopp our hands, and to proceed no further in changes, when both lord Sunderland and I had told you in the strongest terms we could, that no other alteration was thought of, or intended; unless your quitting your employment should have made it absolutely necessary to fill it. At the same time, I think I could not express in words more strong than I did, how much I desired that might not happen. Notwithstanding the passion you were in when you writt, I am very glad you expressed no thoughts of leaving the king's service, and I will even flatter myself that you will still prevail upon lord Townshend to accept Ireland, and that we may continue to live and act for the king's service, with the

same friendship and union which has been. I think it more respectfull to my lord Townshend, that I should not write to him to acquaint him with the king's repeating the offer of Ireland, till I hear from you, who are more likely to prevail. I am, &c.

ROBERT WALPOLE TO SECRETARY STANHOPE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

General discontent at lord Townshend's removal—Sanguine expectations of the tories, jacobites, and discontented whigs—Stanhope's dependants busy and impertinent—Requests that no further offer of the lord lieutenancy may be made to lord Townshend till the king's return.

DEAR SIR; London, Jan. 1—12, 1716—17.

I HAVE the favour of your's of the 1st instant, N. S. and am glad to find you seem to be in a little better temper than you were, and believe me, if you were here, you would be ten times more sensible, than any representations from hence can possibly make of the ill effects of what is a doing. The universal discontent and apprehensions of all that wish well, is more than can be expected, and I doe assure you, this is not owing to any industry or endeavours of those that may be thought more nearly concerned. The spiritt of the tories and jacobites is at the same time reviv'd beyond measure, and has had this effect allready, that summonses are sent into all parts of England to make a general muster, when 'tis certain they had no thoughts before of giving any trouble this sessions; I must farther acquaint you, that the discontented whigs flatter themselves, that the game is now their own, and are disposing and dividing of all the employments with

an air of authority, which you may easily imagine, gives great creditt and weight to those in possession. I cannot forbear telling you, that some immediate creatures and dependants of your's, are the most busy and impertinent in all parts of the town; I have said thus much in short, that you may be truely inform'd of the state of affairs. If you have any other accounts from hence, you are abus'd, and depend upon it, you will find the sense of every man in England of any consideration, that you ever had any esteem for, or that deserves the least regard, to be the same.

When I have said this, I will not enter into any reasoning or argumentation with you at this distance, but think, you must be sensible, that a great deal of what you say, is not to be supported in a conversation betwixt old friends. We very well understand the language of ministers, but when this matter comes to be canvassed with freedom and liberty, you will be sensible of more than 'tis proper to write.

In the mean time, as to what immediately concerns my lord Townshend, I must only beg at present, that you will prevent a second hardship being putt upon him, by a second offer of the lieutenancy of Ireland, and since you say, that the king commanded you to acquaint me, that Ireland shall be kept open till his majesty comes into England, there can be no difficulty in this, or at least no necessity of doing any thing till his Majestie's arrivall.

You will give me leave to think it a little hard when you say, no one man will have more to answer for to his country, than I may have. I agree with you, if I do not honestly endeavour to make up these breaches, I shall be very much to blame; but if what has been done, or is still to be fear'd, have or shall make that impossible, the weight will fall elsewhere, and be a burthen too heavy to bear. Lett me use your own words; you must grow cooler on your side, consider all circumstances, and remember that in England, the

manner of doing things is often more to be regarded than the thing is itself, and I am confident I shall be able to convince you when we meet, that my lord Townshend's case can be consider'd in no other light. I can give no advice, but repeat what I said before; take care that nothing more be done, till you are upon the spott: I think you will alter your sentiments with the climate, if you have not drank deeper of the bowle than I am willing to believe. For as I lived with you so many years in intimacy and friendship, I shall be glad still to live and dye upon that foot, and shall with great pleasure see you deliver'd from imputations, it would grieve you to think of. I will do my part, and if you will do yours, it seems possible to retrieve the most fatall step that ever was taken: that all may go well, is my sincere wishes, and I am, with all possible truth, dear sir, your most faithfull humble servant.

SECRETARY STANHOPE TO ROBERT WALPOLE.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Will follow his advice not to make any further offer of the lord lieutenancy to lord Townshend—Is ready with lord Sunderland to conciliate matters—Earnestly entreats him to prevail on lord Townshend to comply—And promises in the king's name, to permit his lordship in due time to exchange that place for another—Justifies his own conduct.

(Copy.)

DEAR SIR; Hague, January the 16th, 1717.

I HAVE received this morning the favour of your's of the 1st. instant, O. S. and I shall follow the advice you are pleased to give me, of writing nothing to lord Townshend touching Ireland, which as I told you, his

majesty will keep open till his arrival. Since you seem to lay a greater stress upon the manner in which this offer was made than upon the thing itself, I hope you have been turning it in your thoughts, how any thing which may have been taken amiss in the manner, may be set right; and whenever you will be pleased to suggest any thing of that kind, which may be consistent with the king's dignity, and the firm resolution he has taken of supporting what he has done, I shall most willingly and heartily employ my best endeavours to make my lord Townshend easy, and so will my lord Sunderland. But tho' I will not repeat to my lord Townshend, in the king's name, the offer of Ireland, till you allow me so to doe, I must, and doe for the king's sake, for that of the whiggs, and of my lord Townshend himself, most earnestly repeat to you my entreaties, that you will dispose my lord Townshend to accept of it. I am at liberty to assure you, in the king's name, that when my lord Townshend shall have accepted of Ireland, if in six months or in a twelvemonth, he should like better some other post at home in the cabinet council, that his majesty will very readily approve of any scheme that his servants shall concert for placing my lord Townshend where he shall like. At the same time, I have procured liberty from the king, to declare thus much to you. Believe me dear Walpole, when I swear it to you, that I doe not think it possible for all the men in England to prevaile upon the king to readmit my lord Townshend into his service, upon any other terms than of complying with the offer made of Ireland. The king will exact from him this mark of duty and obedience. I doe assure you, that I am not at present in a passion, I tell you very coolly what in my conscience I think, I leave it to you to make such use as you shall think fitt of this very true information; and I will hope, that being thus informed, you will prevent things from being pushed to extremities, which I dread to think of.

For God's sake, is not a lord lieutenant of Ireland of the cabinet council? has he not the same access to the king, whenever he pleases, as any other minister whatsoever? will not my lord Townshend's talents, and the just esteem which every body in the council must have for him, give him a share in business, for ought I know greater, I am sure at least, less invidious than he had before? will not he be constantly in the way of effacing, by his behaviour, any impressions made to his prejudice? if I were not still sincerely a well wisher to his lordship, and did not think it probable, that I should again live well with him, I would not press you at this rate upon this point; I would quietly suffer him to indulge his resentment, which must end in the ruin of his and his friends interest at court, as long as this king lives, which, give me leave to tell you, he is like to do many years.

As to the apprehensions you mention to have been very general of a change, you know as well as I what foundation there has been for them, and whether the refusal of my lord Townshend has not given occasion to them. I will not imagine, since you say it, that any of your friends have used any industry or endeavours to begett such a ferment. I will rather hope, that you, knowing with so much certainty, that not one remove was intended by the king, will have endeavoured to quiet and calm this ill grounded jealousy. I doe not know that I have any creatures or dependants, whose behaviour I can govern, or be answerable for, but this I know, that I have not directly or indirectly, either myself or by any other person, writt or caused to be writt one syllable since this business has been on foot, except to yourself, and once to Mr. Methuen. I know not what you mean by having drank deep of the bowle, I have already acquainted you with what I judge and know to be the king's sentiments upon this business. Whilst I am his servant, I will, to the utmost of my ability, support his dignity, which, amongst many

other good things, I have learnt to do from lord Townshend; and I shall not in so doing value or fear any imputation. It will appear to the world in due time, whether any motive of ambition or interest has governed me in this business, and whether I hadd not most effectually served those who are at present most angry with me, if their own passion did not hinder the good effects of what was well designed. I have, dear Walpole, a very clear conscience, and whilst I am conscious to myself of well doing, I have learnt to be very easy in mind, whatever other people think of me. I am, with great truth, &c.

LORD STANHOPE TO LORD SUNDERLAND.

[Marlborough Papers.]

On the cabals and projects of Bernsdorf.

1719.

YOUR lordship will have perceived by my late letters to Mr. Craggs, how much industry hath been used here to break off with Prussia. I have on that subject made a very curious discovery, namely, that while we were treating with Prussia, old Bernsdorf was reviving at Vienna an old project which he had formed when St. Saphorin was left at Hanover, to strip in a great measure that prince. This fine project is to be executed by the emperor and Poland in conjunction with Hanover. I never knew, nor do I yet know the detail of it. I have learned what I know of it in such a manner as I cannot acquaint the king with; but I have let the duchess into it, and by her assistance I hope we shall baffle it. The first and immediate con-

sequence of such a scheme would be to lose France, which I think we cannot well afford to do at present. The new french embassador here, and Mr. Rottenbourg, at Berlin, are of great use to me. Mr. Whitworth has acted at Berlin, and continues to act there, a very skilful and worthy part. The king has this day told the french embassador that he will send back Mr. Whitworth to Berlin. If, as I begin to hope, we carry that point, you may almost be certain we shall still conclude with Prussia, and shall thereby gain, at least, one very considerable advantage, that no great mischief can happen to us; and we shall avoid bringing England into such engagements as I am sure could never be supported in parliament.

I remember a thought of your lordship touching Mr. Whitworth, which if I thought right, as I did when you mentioned it, is really now become necessary: I mean the making a third secretary for our plantations. No man in the kingdom understands these affairs better; and I assure you that his behaviour at present entitles him to a very considerable regard from every good Englishman. Old Bernsdorf has turned him all manner of ways, and used all manner of artifices, first to cheat him, and then to gain him over to his notions, but all to no purpose. He has very plainly, both to the king and to Mr. Bernsdorf, represented of how pernicious consequences it would be to quarrel with Prussia; and as he is certainly more knowing in all these northern affairs than any body here, his opinion will have great weight, especially backed by me, by the duchess, and indeed by most reasonable people. I have therefore thought it prudent to give a hint of this kind, and shall be glad to know how much further you think I can go with him.

I think never any scheme was framed, so impracticable, so dishonourable, nor so pernicious as what this old man has in his head. He proposes, besides part of the spoils of Prussia for his master, to get for himself

certain baillages situate about Wismar. Of this particular scheme for himself, Penterridter gave us notice. I continue, however, to carry it fairly towards him; and to live just as we used to do. One would have hoped that what has so lately been done for him might have satisfied him; but you may depend upon it that he will do us all the mischief he can. I think, however, as I told you before, that we shall weather this present danger; and it may then deserve consideration whether we should endeavour to get him left here, when the king returns. The duchess is most bitterly incensed against him, and would go any length; but I advise her to do nothing precipitately, especially till we know the sense of our friends in England. Till then I shall continue to do all I can to get the business well carried on, but avoid doing or saying any thing that may give him a handle of complaint. I am, &c.

LORD STANHOPE TO LORD SUNDERLAND.

August 3, 1719.

I HAVE mentioned to the duchess your lordship's coming over, and she has promised and judged it most proper to open it herself first to the king. I can assure you, we both very much approve it; and for my own part, I most earnestly desire you were now here.

You will see by my dispatch to Craggs, the confused situation of our northern affairs. I hope, in the main, that no great evil will happen to us this summer, though I cannot promise much good. The old man grows worse and worse. I think I gain ground upon him with the king, who is extremely good to me.

Speaker Onslow's Remarks on various Parts of Sir Robert Walpole's Conduct; and Anecdotes of the principal Leaders of the Opposition.

[Although some of these remarks and anecdotes relate to the reign of George the first, and others to the later periods of Walpole's administration, yet it was thought proper not to separate them; but to print them as they were written, in a continued narrative.]

[Onslow Papers.]

CHAPTER I.

On the Opposition of sir Robert Walpole to the Peerage bill.

WE have often heard of men who have left one party to joyn another, without any change of principle or inclination avowedly, and only to force the crown, by distressing the administration in parliament, to bring themselves back to, or to obtain those seats of power they had lost or quitted, or sought after, and without designing to continue any longer with their new friends than should be sufficient for that purpose; a practice that has tended more to corrupt and debase the minds of men that use it, and to distress and confound the affairs of the public than any other public evil this age has produced. And however strange and offensive such tergiversations must appear to men of strict minds, and of little acquaintance with the world (for to such only they can appear strange), yet there is nothing more certain than that by some fatal darkness of understanding, or imbecility of heart, many persons otherwise of great probity and honour, have suffered

themselves to be made instruments and supports of these factions, and have been brought to believe (what is in truth the common band of all party unions, and only justifiable where the constitution is really in danger from the settled plan of an administration for that purpose) that they might very honestly act against their conscience in particulars, in order in general to pull down one man they did not like, and to set up another they did, nay to make it a point of honor and fidelity to their friends so to do.

Upon this foundation partly (I mean of distressing the administration) I have reason to think that Mr. Walpole (afterwards sir Robert) exerted himself so eminently and effectually against the bill to restrain the making of peers. I have told you before, the nature of this bill, and that it was much approved of by very many of the whiggs. What occasioned them to like it so well was, the recent memory of the extraordinary creation of twelve peers at once, and of a sudden, under the administration of Mr. Harley, earl of Oxford, and lord treasurer, done as it was supposed, to save him from some disagreeable attack he expected in the house of lords. It was, I remember, universally disapproved of, and by the whiggs so much detested that it was one of the principal subjects of their clamour against him, and afterwards one of the articles of his impeachment. When this bill, therefore, which had the plausibleness of preventing such an abuse for the future, was first brought in, the opposing of it looked so like a contradiction n the whiggs to what they had said and done on the former occasion, that it was thought by the malecontents to be too strong a point, and would be of too much reproach for them to set themselves against (the lords among them perhaps somewhat biass'd by the advantage the bill brought to their body), and at a meeting of the most considerable of them, it was the opinion of all except Mr. Walpole to give into it.

But he dissented so vehemently and passionately to

the so doing, that after much altercation and heat they yielded to his opposing it in the house of commons, or rather because they found that he resolved to do it, whatever they had said or should do upon it. He told them it was the most maintainable point they could make a stand upon in the house of commons against the ministry. He was sure he could put it in such a light as to fire with indignation at it every independent commoner in England; and that he saw a spirit rising against it among some of the warmest of the whiggs that were country gentlemen, and not in other things averse to the administration. That the first discovery of this to him was from what he overheard one Mr. * * * * member for * * * * * say upon it; a plain country gentleman of about eight hundred pounds a year, of a rank equal only to that, and with no expectations or views to himself beyond what his condition at that time gave him. But this person talking with another member about this bill, he said with heat and some oaths (which was what Mr. Walpole overheard and catched at)—"What, shall I consent to the shutting the door upon my family ever coming into the house of lords!" This, Mr. Walpole told the company, struck him with conviction, that the same sentiment might easily be made to run through the whole body of country gentlemen, be their estates then what they would. And so it proved, to a very thorough defeat of the ministers in this instance.

His performance in this debate, I have heard, for I was not then come into parliament, was very great, and had as much of natural eloquence and of genius in it as had been heard by any of the audience within those walls. His topics were popular, and made for those he hoped to bring over, from the story I have just now told you. He talked of the honours of peerage as the constitutional reward of great qualities and actions only, in the service of the commonwealth, and to be kept open for that purpose. *That the usual path to the*

temple of honour had been thro' the temple of virtue; but by this bill it was now to be only thro' the sepulchre of a dead ancestor, without merit or fame. In this strain he bore down every thing before him, even against very able performances by many very considerable persons who spoke on the other side of the question.

ON OPPOSITION, CHAPTER II.

Walpole's conduct in the prosecution of bishop Atterbury—Motives for laying a tax on papists and non-jurors—Impropriety of multiplying oaths—Walpole's art in confounding the tories with the jacobites—Anecdotes and characters of Daniel and William Pulteney—Sir William Wyndham—Sir John Barnard—Sir Joseph Jekyll—Lords Carteret—Chesterfield—Bolingbroke—Conclusion—Observations on sir Robert Walpole.

A REMARKABLE event happened at this time, 1722, which contributed very much to the fixing Mr. Walpole's interest and power then with the king, and manifesting fresh proofs of his abilities and usefulness as a minister. It was the management of a discovery made by the regent of France to the government here of a plot in favour of the pretender, formed and carried on principally by Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, a man of great parts, and of a most restless and turbulent spirit, daring and enterprizing, tho' then very infirm, and capable of any artifice; but proud and passionate, and not of judgment enough for the undertakings he engaged in. His views were not only to be the first churchman, but the first man also in the state, not less than Wolsey, whom he admired and thought to imitate; and found he could only succeed in this, by the merit of his overturning the present government and

advancing that of the pretender in its stead. He had been long projecting this revolution, but went now upon the foundation of the discontents in the kingdom, arising from the South Sea transactions in the year 20, which were still fresh in the minds and hearts of the people, especially the sufferers, many of whom imputed their losses to the government, as designing by a fraud to deprive them of their property, and propagated this notion with too much success, among the people in general.

When this intimation was given from the regent (who, it was said, did it on condition that no one should die for it) the difficulty of getting to the bottom and fixing the evidence of it still remained: but when that was effected, in a great measure by Mr. Walpole's dexterity, who had the chief part in unravelling this dark mystery, the prosecution was as difficult to manage as the other, from the want, in most of the cases, of legal proofs to convict the criminals at law, and from the necessity not to let them go without some degree of punishment that might be a security to the government against the like attempts for the future, and worthy of the notice the government had taken of this. This he also undertook and carried through in parliament with great skill and clearness, and made it serve another purpose too he always aimed at, the setting the whiggs against the tories as jacobites, which all of them gave too much handle for on this and many other occasions, and making therefore combinations between them and any body of whiggs to be impracticable; and it had that effect for some time. In the proceedings in the house of lords against the bishop, he appeared as a witness for the government to some things which had been solemnly denied by the other: the bishop used all the art his guilt would admit of, to perplex and make Mr. Walpole contradict himself, but he was too hard for the bishop upon every turn, altho' a greater trial of skill this way, scarce ever

happened between two such combatants. The one fighting for his reputation, the other for his acquittal. The expectation of people in it, as they were differently inclined to the parties, and the cause and the solemnity of it from the place and the audience it was in, made it look like a listed field for combat of another sort, and the joy of victory as great as there. To say the truth, the bishop sunk under the weight of his guilt, and indeed the whole of his defence, as made by himself, was not adequate to his real abilities.

He grounded also upon this, what was more politick, as I thought, than just, the submitting the estates of the papists in England to a tax of 100,000*l.* under the name of a composition for their recusancy, altho' it did not appear, that any, or at least but very few of them were engaged in this design. But he did it to terrify 'em from giving any countenance to such undertakings, and to make them to stop, which they were most likely to be able to do, all such from proceeding, by showing them, that let what would happen, they, as a body of men, should pay for it; and altho' the levy fell very short of the sum imposed, yet it has with the since mildness of the government towards them, very probably been the means of keeping these people quiet from this time. He answered the objection of injustice in it, not by contending that they were in this particular conspiracy, but that this 100,000*l.* was but a part of what they had already forfeited, which was a third part of their estates from the time of their recusancy, and therefore due to the government, tho' not taken; and as the government now took but this small proportion, it would rather be a favour to them to let this compound for the whole; and a provision was inserted in the act for that purpose. But all this appeared farce to me and some others, and which I shall show you in what I shall say elsewhere upon this subject.

Another thing which arose from this last, did not do the government so much service as this: it happened

by accident; but he took it up and pursued it with his usual party spirit, and it was this: Somebody in the debate of the other matter, said it ought to go to protestant non-jurors as well as to papists, and the rather because they were both already liable to a double of the common land tax. This appeared so plausible, that it was generally given into; but then to do it with any justice, every body was to have an opportunity of swearing to the government; and, to do it with effect, every body was to be obliged to swear; that thus the real non-jurors might be known, and register their estates for this or any future imposition of the like sort, or to keep them in dread of it.

I have mentioned this last to you, not so much for the sake of the thing itself as for the extraordinary effect and operation it produced. People in general were so terrified with the apprehensions of not only forfeiting their estates in possession if they did not take the oaths, but also what they had in reversions, limitations ever so remote, or the least relation to or expectation of any, nay with regard to their money or effects of any sort, that the whole nation almost, men, women, and children capable of taking an oath flocked to the places where the quarter sessions were holden, that they might by swearing to the government free themselves and their families from the danger, as they thought, of losing their fortunes to it. I saw a great deal of it, and it was a strange as well as ridiculous sight to see people crouding to give a testimony of their allegiance to a government, and cursing it at the same time for giving them the trouble of so doing, and for the fright they were put into by it; and I am satisfied more real disaffection to the king and his family arose from it than from any thing which happened in that time. It made the government to appear tyrannical and suspicious, than which nothing can be more hurtful to a prince or lessen his safety.

Upon this occasion, which indeed was one of my

reasons for relating this fact to you, I cannot help observing of what little use to a government the imposition of oaths to it has ever been. It's very true that nothing in the constitution is more ancient. It was the practice among our Saxon ancestors, continued after the accession of the Norman race, and enforced often by particular oaths under several of the following kings, but never prevented any revolution that either reasons of government or ambition could bring about. To come nearer to our own times, oaths were made to Charles the first, but did not save him. Oaths were taken to the parliament and common-wealth, but the same people forgot them or broke them under Cromwell, and all at the restoration swore allegiance to Charles the second. They swore the same to king James, and the success of the revolution made the same persons almost take the same oaths to king William and queen Mary, and to queen Anne: many in the rebellion of 1715, had sworn to king George the first, and more who wished it success. After all this, who can think these bindings of any security? It may torture the minds of people, but never influences their actings.

A government is never secure of the hearts of the people but from the justice of it, and the justice of it is generally a real security. A good government, therefore, does not want these oaths to defend it, and a bad one the casuists say, frees subjects from the obligation of them, and is a doctrine the people in all times have given into. Some particular men may possibly be influenc'd by them, but I speak of the generality of the people; and, with regard to them, it has ever been found at least useless. But this practice is, in many respects, generally very dangerous. Princes are apt to trust too much to it in evil government, and are too much encouraged to that by it. Charles the first was deceived by it, and it deluded his son James into the extravagant attempt he made upon the religion and liberties of his subjects. Besides the minds of men are

often corrupted by this to a slight of the obligation of an oath in general, either by taking these oaths unwillingly, many times against their consciences, and only by compulsion. Others swear what they do not comprehend, as was the case of nine in ten of those who took the oaths on the occasion I have been speaking of, and then the evil is, as was observed by a great man at that time, that when men habituate themselves to swear what they do not understand, they will easily be brought to forswear themselves in what they do understand. The like danger is from the frequency of oaths that is here required, which allways takes off from the awe of 'em, and consequently their force. Indeed no oath should be imposed where it is possible that the interest of the person taking it should induce him either to break it or swear falsely; and, in my opinion, no oaths at all should be appointed but in judicial matters; which as they are necessary in those cases, should be kept for them only, that they may thereby be the more solemn, and consequently the more forcible there, where only they are really wanted, or can be of any true use in society. To conclude this digression, I have often wonder'd that men do not see the unreasonableness and danger of making people swear where there may be an interest to tempt them to forswear or afterwards break their oaths, from that uniform practice of courts of justice not to suffer any one to be put upon his oath in judgment, when he is either to get or lose any thing by the event of that cause in which he is brought to be a witness.

But to return: notwithstanding the imprudence and folly of thus swearing the whole nation in the manner I have described, yet was the same thing continued by a subsequent act of parliament deliberately made against the advice and admonition, and to the great scandal of many wise men, who wished the best to the government, and saw the prejudice it would do to the king and his family. But as parties are generally fac-

tions, and the chief business of factions is, to annoy one another, those men have always most merit with their party, who contribute most to this humour: and to that, as this was designed to affect the tories, must this silly zeal of the whiggs then in parliament be imputed: and it is most certain, that on too many occasions it has been thought, he was the honest whigg-friend to the government, who did most to make the tories enemies to it, which many of them from resentment to the whiggs, and being deprived of power, did but too much incline, and give into.

But however distasteful this was to several serious men among the whiggs, Mr. Walpole enjoyed and encouraged it all, as pursuing his plan of having every body to be deemed a jacobite who was not a profest and known whigg. When he had thus, by the unravelling of this plot, and punishing the principal offenders, established his own credit with the party in general, and as he hoped with his master too, he believed himself to have a fair prospect of establishing his own power, which, as he built upon a whigg-party bottom only, he laboured all he could to unite those to him who had been peculiarly dependant on my lord Sunderland. Some he succeeded with, but not with all, and of them several remained in their employments whom he could not remove, or did not dare to attempt, because of the interest they had with the king, thro' the means of the Germans; and this body of people, small, but of considerable rank, remained his enemies to the time of the king's death, waiting and watching for every opportunity to ruin him, which, however, it is most undoubted they could not have done, without ruining at the same time, the whigg cause and party. But they thought otherwise; and now began something of the whigg opposition to his power, which grew afterwards to be so troublesome and formidable to him. It was at first made up chiefly of such of my lord Sunderland's creatures as he could not attach to him; but it had very

soon the addition of some others from various motives and views.

Since that opposition to him makes so great part of his history, and from whence so much of his character arises, it will not be improper for the better illustration of that, to give you some description of the persons who undertook, or had the principal management of it.

He who first endeavoured to form this opposition into a system, or regular method of proceeding, with a view only to ruin Mr. Walpole, and for that purpose to unite people of every character and principle, and in which he took the most indefatigable pains, was Mr. Daniel Poulteney,* in all other respects almost, a very worthy man, very knowing, and laborious in business, especially in foreign affairs, of strong, but not lively parts, a clear and weighty speaker, grace in his deportment, and of great virtue and decorum in his private life, generous and friendly. But, with all this, of most implacable hatred where he did hate, violent, keen, and most bitter in his resentments, gave up all pleasures and comforts, and every other consideration to his anger, and fell at last a martyr to it in his quarrel with Mr. Walpole; for his not succeeding in it prey'd upon his spirits, which, and with his living much with the lord Bolingbroke (as an enemy to Mr. Walpole) threw him into an irregularity of drinking that occasioned his death, to the great loss and regret of those

* Daniel Pulteney was envoy at Copenhagen during the reign of queen Anne, a commissioner of trade in 1717, and a lord of the admiralty in 1721. He came first into parliament in 1721, on the death of secretary Craggs. He married Margaret Deering, daughter of Benjamin Tichbourne, brother to Henry viscount Tichbourne. Daniel died in 1731, leaving three daughters, two of whom died unmarried, the third, by failure of the male issue in William and Harry Pulteney, became heiress at law to their large fortunes. She married Mr. Johnstone, son of sir James Johnstone, bart. now sir William Pulteney, and by him left an only daughter Henrietta Laura, the present lady Bath. See the genealogical table in the note to the 39th chapter.

who were now joyned with him, to whom he was a sort of magazine for all the materials necessary to the work he principally had engaged them in.

This animosity to Mr. Walpole arose from his intimacy with my lord Sunderland, to whom he was brother-in-law, by having married the sister of my lord Sunderland's last wife. He was in the depth of all that lord's political secrets, as far at least as he trusted any body, and was designed by him to be secretary of state in the scheme he formed of a new administration, if he had lived long enough to have once more overset Mr. Walpole and my lord Townshend. But my lord Sunderland's death putting an end to the other's hopes, so sower'd his mind, that from the moment of his disappointment, I verily believe, he scarcely thought of any thing else, but to revenge it in an opposition to him who had been the chief opponent of his friend and patron. This was at first carried on in whispers and insinuations, and raising private prejudices against Mr. Walpole; for he still continued one of the commissioners of the admiralty, and so still voted with the administration; but resigning that office, which he had great joy in being disentangled from, that he might, as he soon did, act openly and without reserve against the ministry in every thing; and was the person chiefly who settled his kinsman Mr. Poulteney (afterwards earl of Bath) in this opposition, tho' they little agreed, or indeed conversed with one another before, nay rather personally disliked one another, even to the last, and they were in truth, of very different characters.

Whatever suspicions Mr. Daniel Poulteney might lie under of entering into some dark and dangerous designs * against the government itself, it is most certain the other had never any thoughts that led to jacobitism;

* The insinuation hinted at by speaker Onslow, that Daniel Pulteney was engaged in designs contrary to the protestant succession, seems to have been urged without sufficient foundation.

and if there was any thing relating to the publick, that he was constant to, it was his fears of the pretender, his abhorrence to that cause, and his attachment to the king and his family. And it was from this, and not a little too, because of his great fortune, which might be at stake, that he had often some checks of conscience, and very melancholy apprehensions, least his violence against the administration of sir Robert Walpole, and joining for that purpose with those supposed to be the enemies to the government, might not weaken the foundations of it, and give too much advantage to them who were thought to mean its destruction. He was, without dispute, a person of very eminent endowments, rather natural than acquired, altho' not without the last, but with a mixture of such natural defects and weaknesses too, that no time, I believe, can produce an instance of a man of so variable and uncertain a mind, who knew not that he was so, and never designed to be so.

I am persuaded he thought his life was one continued scene of uniformity in principles and actings; and as those who knew him best, wondered at the popularity he once had, so he who knew himself least, wondered as much that he ever lost it. He had indeed the most popular parts for public speaking, that I ever knew; animating every subject of popularity, with the spirit and fire that the orators of the ancient commonwealths govern'd the people by; was as classical and as elegant in the speeches he did not prepare as they were in their most studied compositions, mingling wit and pleasantry, and the application even of little stories so properly to affect his hearers, that he would overset the best argumentation in the world, and win people to his side, often against their own convictions, by making ridiculous that truth they were influenced by before, and making some men to be afraid and ashamed of being thought within the virulence of some bitter expression of his, or within the laugh that generally went thro' the town at any memorable stroke of

his wit. And, altho' this never got him a majority in the house of commons, yet he usually had the occasional hearers that were there; and to that audience he generally spoke, and by them established his general fame, as long, I mean, as his talents were employed against ministers, courtiers, power, and corruption. He certainly hurt sir Robert more than any of those who oppos'd him. What his motives were to this opposition, and what happened to him afterwards, I leave to other accounts of him, which are various. He was undoubtedly a very extraordinary person; and in his private life free from common vices, with a sense of religion even to devotion.

Another person who acted a very considerable part in this opposition, was sir William Wyndham,* as a

* Sir William Wyndham was descended † from an ancient family of that name, which seems to have taken its surname from Wymondham, or Wyndham in Norfolk, and which afterwards settled at Felbrigge in the same county. By the marriage of sir John Wyndham in the reign of Edward the sixth, with the daughter of John Sydenham of Orchard, the elder line was established at Orchard, hence called Orchard Wyndham, in the county of Somerset. Sir Wm. Wyndham, the person under consideration, was lineally descended from this line. He was born in 1686, and on the death of his father sir Edward, succeeded to the title of baronet, to a very considerable estate, and to the distinction and influence which his family had possessed in the western counties of England. He increased his consequence by espousing in 1708, lady Catherine Seymour, second daughter of Charles, duke of Somerset. Born of a tory family, and imbued from his early infancy with notions of divine and indefeasible right, he was adverse to the interruption of the lineal descent, and uniformly opposed the establishment of the succession in the house of Brunswick. In the reign of queen Anne, he was brought forwards into public employment at a very early age by his friend Bolingbroke, with whom he lived in habits of the strictest intimacy, and by whose brilliant talents he was seduced into similar excesses of pleasure and gallantry. Under the administration of Harley, he was made successively master of the buck hounds,

† Collins, Edmonson's Baronegium.

leader of the tories, or such of them, at least, who were not averse to come with their party into power and offices under the present royal family. In the latter part of queen Anne's reign, he had been secretary at war and chancellor of the exchequer; tho' a very young man, raised so high in the world against the opinion of it by the favour of my lord Bolingbroke; with whom he lived in an intimacy of pleasures and gallantries as well as business; and from his attachment and gratitude to him (which he ever preserved) and from party violence and the heat of his youth had engaged in the rebellion of 1715, but escaped any punishment except that of a short confinement, by the consideration then had of the noble family he had married into, and who had great merit with the king and his family. He continued, however, in all the measures of his party against the government, and by frequent speaking in public, and great application to business, and the constant instruction he still received from his friend, and as it were his master, especially in foreign affairs, he became from a very disagreeable speaker and little knowing in business to be one of the most pleasing and able speakers of his time, wore out all the prejudices of party, grew moderate towards the dissenters, against whom he once bore a most implacable hatred, studied and understood the nature of government and the constitution of his own country, and found such a new set of principles with regard to the publick, and from them

secretary at war, and chancellor of the exchequer. His principles in favour of the restoration of the Stuarts were so well known, that on the accession of George the first, he had no official employment, and in 1715, he was imprisoned in the tower, until the conclusion of the rebellion. In July 1716, he was released under the bail of the dukes of Somerset and Richmond, the earls of Rochester and Thomond, and lord Gower.* He died in 174 ; his son, sir Charles Wyndham, on the death of the duke of Somerset, succeeded to the title of earl of Egremont.

* Political State.

grew to think that the religion and liberties of the nation so much depended on the support of the present family on the throne, that he lost all confidence with the Jacobites and the most rigid of the tories, and it is thought would have left them entirely if he could have stood the reproach of that in his own country, or could have maintained a prevailing interest there without them: and upon that footing would willingly have come into a new whigg administration upon the exclusion of sir Robert Walpole, with whom he would never have acted, and with the admission of some few of his tory friends, who in company with him would willingly also have left their party for such a change, swayed not a little perhaps in this by observing that no other road would lead them to those honours and preferments in the state, which it was just for men of abilities to expect, and a folly to exclude themselves and their families from when they could take them, as they thought, without hurt to their principles and their characters. But he did not live long enough to have this happen to him.

He was, in my opinion, the most made for a great man of any one that I have known in this age. Every thing about him seem'd great. There was no inconsistency in his composition, all the parts of his character suited, and were a help to one another. There was much of grace and dignity in his person, and the same in his speaking. He had no acquirements of learning, but his eloquence improved by use was strong, full, and without affectation, arising chiefly from his clearness, propriety, and argumentation, in the method of which last, by a sort of induction almost peculiar to himself, he had a force beyond any man I ever heard in public debates. He had not the vivacity of wit and pleasantry in his speeches so entertaining in the former person, but there was a spirit and power in his speaking, that always animated himself and his

hearers, and with the decoration of his manner, which was indeed very ornamental, produced not only the most attentive, respectful,* but even a reverend regard to whatever he spoke.

He was besides generally serious, and always decent, never positive, and often condescending, though sometimes severe and pointed. There was indeed great decorum through his whole carriage, and no man ever contributed more than he did to the dignity of parliament. Had he been a minister in his latter days, I am satisfied, he would have had the same decorum in office as he had in parliament, and he had that civility and good breeding in his demeanor, that made him as fit for a court as any other situation, and his abilities would have made him equal to any. He had certainly great notions, and appeared to have a high regard to the principles of honour and justice. It has been said, that he was haughty and passionate, and would have carried his power too high, and I am afraid it was the weakness he was most liable to fall into. Those who spoke most of this, took their thoughts of him chiefly from what they remembered of him in his younger days, when, it is very true, he had too much of this temper; but as far as I could observe, he was much changed in this as he was in his principles and other things, and surely no man in general was ever less in his advanced age of what he had been in his youth, than he seem'd to be. But as he was not without his fears too, and some desire of fame, they, from his knowledge also of the world, would have been some restraint

* A striking instance of the high respect paid to sir William Wyndham, appeared in one of the debates which related to the convention. In the midst of a speech, being confused, he turned to the speaker, and said, "Sir, I must beg leave to recollect myself;" he then sat down. A profound and respectful silence ensued, for some minutes, when sir William again rose and continued his speech with his usual animation and energy.

upon the other, and if so, his state might only have procured that respect which is always due and necessary to government. What his firmness in great trials would have been, I cannot say. He was certainly of a very high spirit, and that with power well managed might have supported him under any difficulties. If I have spoken too highly of him, it must be imputed to the great opinion I conceived of him in the house of commons, where I never saw him fail of being a great man.

These three were the principal opponents sir Robert Walpole had in the house of commons. There were others too in that place who bore their parts in the same work, but were far inferior to those I have mentioned, some in point of abilities, and others from their youth and want of experience; although among the latter some were young men of great natural and acquired endowments, and from the training they had by their opposition to the court, came afterwards to be of considerable figure and rank in public office and business. It was indeed from the applause for speaking which these had acquired, that it became a fashion for most of the then young men of birth and fortune to set themselves against the court, and to endeavour to obtain seats in parliament for the sake of the fame they hoped to get, as the others had done, by popular declamations there, against the evil power and corruption of the administration, which they chiefly, or rather only, applied to sir Robert Walpole; and too often in a language that by no means became their youth to give or his years to have it given to him. But for this also they had their applauders; and it is scarcely to be imagined to what a height it arose, and how much general mischief he received from this spirit and licentiousness of speech in these young patriots. It went the farther, because in them it was deemed native virtue and disinterestedness, the result of untainted minds, and hearts too young to be corrupted by envy of power and profit, (the usual motives of older men in faction) and in many

or most of them, indeed, I am persuaded, in the beginning at least, they were made to believe they were saving their country from destruction, and that they only could do it.

But they were the tools and instruments of those who meant no such thing, and who were in opposition only because they had not power, and made use of the virtue of these younger and better men to the quicker obtaining of it for themselves, which when they had done, and manifested by their after actings what their former motives had been, many of their young followers soon discerned the cheat, and shew'd their resentment accordingly. Some, however, who were older and grown wiser, saw the prospect the change had opened, and made as able a use of it as the best experienced of their principals had done; but alas! with a change too of style and behaviour, that has made me often mourn over them and reflect how very wary young men should be of what they say and do in their political outset, lest the language and actings they then hold should not be able to last them through their whole journey: and I have found also that nothing can be more unfortunate for any man, than to begin his public life in the schools of faction and defamation. It is unhappy enough to begin it in a servile and implicit compliance with power; but the other is far more dangerous. The middle track between those two extremes is the path that honest and wise men will take, and is the true character of a parliament man.

The next person in the house of commons, who I shall mention, and gave much disturbance there to sir Robert Walpole and his administration, was one of the members for the city of London, and the most eminent man among them; not for fortune, which he seem'd to have no appetite for, beyond a competency for his rank and fashion, which was that of a merchant by profession (though of no extensive dealings), and of the great offices in the city, all of which he had passed

through; but his consideration arose from his own intrinsic worth and abilities, unassisted by any collateral advantages whatsoever. For he had neither birth, alliances, riches, or stations in the government to forward him, but was himself, if ever any man was, the worker out of his own true fame. Nor had he the advantages of learning, language, or manner to ornament or set off his natural or acquired endowments, the latter of which lay chiefly in the knowledge of trade, its foundation and extent, and of the whole circle of taxes, funds, money, and credit. In all which he had more sagacity, acuteness, force, and closeness of argumentation, better and more practicable notions, than almost any man I ever knew, with a disinterestedness as to himself, that no temptation of the greatest profit or very high stations (for such he might have had) could have drawn him from the very retired and humble life he generally chose to lead, not only for the sake of his health, but the content of his mind in a moderate habitation, in a neighbouring village to London, from whence he only came, as he was occasionally called to any business of importance in the city or in parliament; in the first of which, he was a great magistrate, and in the other, of true weight and influence. He was besides, of a very regular and religious life, without show or affectation, as in his public deportment; he seem'd to have made the best principles of both parties to be the guide of his political acting: so that he was in truth, one of the greatest examples of private, and in general, of public virtue that this age has produced; and had a popularity arising from that, which, though he did not court or cherish in the way it is usually got and kept up, was more universal and lasting, than that of any man of his time, manifesting itself in calm and real instances of esteem, and not in noise and riot, which he himself would have been the first to suppress. (1764) He is lately dead in full possession of this true fame.

After so much of the character of sir John Barnard,* it cannot be supposed that in his oppositions to sir Robert Walpole, he was at all actuated by the spirit of faction; nor do I believe he was, or that he ever en-

Sir John Barnard, knight, was born at Reading in 1685. His parents being quakers he was brought up at a school at Wandsworth in Surrey, appropriated to the education of persons of that persuasion, and derived little information from his master. In 1703, he quitted the society of quakers, was baptised by Compton, bishop of London, and continued a member of the established church. He rose into eminence solely by his indefatigable assiduity in business and high integrity in his mercantile transactions. He had attained his thirty-sixth year when he first attracted the public notice, and on an occasion wholly unsought by himself. "A "bill greatly affecting the wine trade had passed through the "house of commons, and was depending in the upper house. "The principal merchants who would have been injured by the "operation of the bill, united in presenting a petition to the lords, "praying to be heard against it, by themselves or counsel. Their "request being granted, Mr. Barnard, without his knowledge, was "selected as the fittest person to prove the grievance, and to answer "every objection to the petition. Through some unaccountable "negligence he was not acquainted with the business till the after-"noon before he was to be heard by the peers. This singular dis-"advantage, when it came to be known, made his speech appear "the more extraordinary. By the extent of his acquaintance with "commerce, and the perspicuity and force of his reasoning, accom-"panied with a becoming modesty, he contributed in so high a de-"gree to carry the point aimed at, that all the petitioners consi-"dered themselves as principally indebted to his talents for their "success."* This instance of his abilities rendered him so conspicuous and popular, that he was put up as a member for London, without the smallest solicitation on his part, and chosen in the warmest contest ever known in that city. His parliamentary abilities were acknowledged by all; and by none more than by sir Robert Walpole, whose measures he almost uniformly opposed. To his talents as a speaker, he paid a due eulogium. As he was riding out with a party, some persons were overheard talking on the other side of a narrow lane, the hedge of which concealed them from view. One of the party saying, whose voice is that? sir Robert replied: do you

* Biographia Britannica, Art. Barnard.

tered with the others into any formed design to ruin or remove him, however he might wish the latter, from the then dislike he seemed to have of the principles of his administration, especially after the famous attempt of sir Robert Walpole to turn the collection of some of the inland duties into an excise, which sir John Barnard had much contributed to defeat; and sir Robert Walpole's manner of debating a scheme the other had proposed, to reduce the interest of the public debt to 3 per cent., of both which I shall speak more particularly very soon. And here it must be confessed, that his opposing the measures of the government was more constant and settled, and had more of intemperance in it towards sir Robert Walpole, than can seem well to consist with the description I have before given of this gentleman.

But among all his great qualities he had some blemishes, rather from his constitution, however, than his will or design. He was of a very warm temper, too soon wrought up to passion, and when under that operation was often deprived of his judgment, and even of his usual discernment. He was likewise too persevering and tenacious of his opinions, and when in the

not know! it is one which I never shall forget. I have often felt its power. On meeting at the end of the lane, adds the biographer, sir Robert Walpole with that enchanting courtesy he possessed, saluting Mr. Barnard, told him what had passed."† The minister frequently used to rally his sons who were praising the speeches of Pulteney, Pitt, Littleton, and others, by saying you may cry up their speeches if you please, but when I have answered sir John Barnard, and lord Polwarth, I think I have concluded the debate. In 1728, he was chosen alderman; and, in 1737, lord mayor of London. He represented the city of London five successive parliaments. In 1758, the infirmities of old age increasing, he resigned his alderman's gown; and soon afterwards retired from public business to his villa at Clapham in Surrey, where he died in 1764, aged 79.

† Biographia Britannica, Art. Barnard.

wrong, would shift and refine, and subtilize so much to save himself in his disputing, that, in some instances, with those who did not know him well, it created some unkind suspicions of his sincerity; but all that, I am satisfied, was more owing to the narrowness of the company he kept, and the lead he always had in their conversations, which usually begets impatience of contradiction, and a love of disputing for the sake of victory, than to any fixed intention of imposing upon or deceiving his audience. He had also that regard for the city of London, and the profession of merchants, and that warmth for their interests, and indeed for every person he undertook to serve, that on some occasions, it *has* threw him into partialities for them that he himself might not perceive, tho' every body else did. He was not, perhaps, without his vanity too, and that might carry him into a desire of trying his skill with sir Robert Walpole in those matters in which he was thought to have no equal, and to be sure, he had none, unless sir John Barnard was the man; I mean in the business of money and credit, and in this it was, that he chiefly affected and hurt sir Robert, though seldom with any real superiority.

There was one person more in the house of commons (sir J. Jekyl) I will mention here, though he was not in a set opposition to the ministry, and was sometimes with them, and never against them from the motives the others were thought to have, I should rather say the three first: yet as he most usually differed in the house of commons from those who were in power, and had much dislike to sir Robert Walpole in many things, and bore no great reverence to his character in general, and being also much known and talked of in the times of sir Robert's ministry, and being likewise of a very particular turn in his public and private actings, it may not be improper—but this hereafter.

There were two other persons, who in different ways

contributed very much to the keeping up the fire of opposition to sir Robert Walpole's administration—the late lord Bolingbroke, and the lord Carteret, afterwards earl of Granville. But as I know not enough of them to be very particular in their characters, I shall only describe them as they were generally spoken of. They were universally esteemed of the greatest genius for parts and knowledge of any men of the age; the latter thought to be the better scholar, and to have formed his eloquence more upon the ancients, and to have more of their spirit in it, than the former, but the first was far the better writer, and had been a very lively and able speaker in both houses of parliament. He was thought too to have more knowledge and skill in the affairs of Europe from his long experience abroad and intimacy there with men of the first rank for business and capacity. But neither of them were thought to know enough of the real temper and constitution of their own country, altho' lord Bolingbroke wrote much on that subject; they were both of them of unbounded spirit and ambition, impatient of restraint, contemning the notion of equality with others in business, and even disdaining to be any thing if not the first and highest in power. They were not famed for what is called personal courage, but in the conduct of affairs were deemed bold if not rash, and the lord Bolingbroke was of a temper to overturn kingdoms to make way for himself and his talents to govern the world; whilst the other in projecting the plans of his administration, thought much more of raising a great name to himself all over Europe, and having that continued by historians to all posterity, than of any present domestic popularity or renown whatsoever. He thought consulting the interior interests and disposition of the people, the conduct of business in parliaments, and the methods of raising money for the execution even of his own designs, was a work below his applications, and to be left as underparts of government to the care of inferior

and subordinate understandings, in subserviency however to his will and measures. But much of this perhaps was owing more to his never having been of the house of commons than even to the natural height of his spirit, altho' the last had but too well formed him for those disregards. They were both, I believe, very incorrupt as to money. It was not their aim to aggrandize themselves that way. Lord *Carteret* was all glory, even to the enthusiasm of it, and that made him rather more scrupulous than the other in the means he used for his greatness. But lord Bolingbroke's was merely power, and to be the leader of it, without any other gratification but what the present enjoyment of it might give him, in a word they were both made rather for the splendor of great monarchies than the sober counsels of a free state, whose liberty is its chief concern. Although upon the whole, lord Carteret seem'd much the better man, and a safer minister than the other.

With these talents and temper, it will not be wondered at, that they should be enemies to sir Robert Walpole, and he to them. But his apprehensions of what they might do against him, were not the same with regard to both, nor of the same sort with those he had of the other persons before-mentioned, because they were of the house of commons where he was, and where the chief scene of business lay, and if he got his affairs through that place, he was not very solicitous as to what might happen in the house of lords, where the party against him was very small, and a speech or two from lord Carteret, and from two or three more, was all he had to fear. But his apprehensions of hurt from lord Carteret lay another way. It was at court he feared him most, as the most likely person to supplant him with the king and queen, who disliked lord Carteret less than any of the others who carried on this opposition. For he had very early in his life applied himself to the affairs of Germany and the northern

courts, he had been a minister at one of them, and had made many connections of acquaintance and intimacy with the persons that came from that part of the world hither, and especially with the Hanoverian ministers (none of whom ever loved sir Robert Walpole), by whose means he had some communications with the queen, if not the king, and they at least had no unfavourable opinion of him; and when he did come into power, upon the removal of sir Robert Walpole, had more of the king's favour and opinion than any of the other ministers, partly for the reasons before-mentioned, but chiefly, that his politics made very much for the interests of Hanover, which he always laboured to unite with those of his country.

But lord Bolingbroke did not molest sir Robert Walpole in this way. He had no hopes of coming into business and power, under the present king at least, but by forcing his passage to it, and making, as he thought, even the king's safety to depend upon it. He had by his almost weekly writings, in which he was very able, so irritated and inflamed the nation (who eagerly read his invectives) against sir Robert Walpole and the measures of the government, in which he often personally involved the king and queen, that, at sometimes, there was too much reason to fear the rage he had wrought the body of the people up to, might have produced the most desperate attempts. But he meant not that, I believe (whatever has been the suspicion), but only to terrify the king into a change of his ministry, and for himself to be thereby restored to his honours, which would, as he always flattered himself, soon put him at the head of affairs. And seasons there were in the course of this opposition, that if it had succeeded, might possibly have procured him a restitution of his peerage (his estate was given him by parliament before), though by what has fallen out since, one may doubt even of that.

There was besides these two, another person of great

rank, who came to have a considerable share in the design of ruining sir Robert Walpole, I mean the earl of Chesterfield: he was esteemed the wittiest man of his time, and of a sort, that has scarcely been known since the reign of king Charles the second, and revived the memory of the great wits of that age, to the liveliest of whom he was thought not to be unequal. He was besides this, a very graceful speaker in publick, had some knowledge of affairs, having been ambassador in Holland, and when he was engaged in debates, always took pains to be well informed of the subject, so that no man's speaking was ever more admired, or drew more audience to it, than his did, but chiefly from those, who either relished his wit, or were pleased with seeing the ministry exposed by his talent of ridicule, and the bitterness of jest he was so much master of and never spared. And this made him so very terrible to the ministers who were of the house of lords, that they dreading his wit upon them there, and his writings too, for he sometimes, as it was thought, furnished the weekly paper of the opposition with the most poignant pieces it had.

Sir Robert Walpole continued in his fullness of power till 1741, fortified, as he believed, by his triumphant defeat of his principal opposers in their motion for an address to the king to remove him from his presence and council: that success rendered him too secure in his own mind, and it is said, made him remiss in his means to obtain the next parliament. But be that as it will, he could not support himself in the new house of commons, at least his best friends thought so, altho' he himself thought otherwise, and reproached them for it; and therefore after many attempts to save himself, but in vain, he yielded at last, altho' with much reluctance, resigned his employments, and was made an earl with every private favour he desired of the king. His retreat was entire from any concern in the business of government, but not from the following

estimation of almost every man of those that had surrounded him when in the height of his power. He lived but a very few years afterwards, and died, as I have been told, with great seeming composure of mind, even under excruciating pains from the stone.

I will end this account of him with saying, that he was a wise and able minister, and the best man from the goodness of his heart, which was characteristic in him to live with and live under of any great man I ever knew.

On the Conduct and Principles of Sir Robert Walpole, by Governor Pownal.

THE publick characters of men who have been engaged in the service of their country must be considered with reference to the drama in which they performed their part; that is, with reference to the state of things and men, and to the spirit of the times in which they acted: their actions must be compared with the nature and merit of the object which it was their duty to aim at; and the measures which they operated by must be judged of by the effect that they produced upon the whole.

Let the conduct and character of this great minister be examined by these references.

First, with reference to the drama.

Kings and the abettors of regal power, as inherent *in the person*, not in the *office of kings*, have always invariably, from the time of the Norman intrusion, been endeavouring to establish the *Norman system* of government on the ruin of the *Saxon system*. The genuine English have always as invariably resisted this attempt. *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari* were the words of their

constant protest. They always set up that system of government which they held to be *constitutional*, in opposition to that which power attempted to make *legal*. These and such were the *Whiggs* and *Tories* of this kingdom ages before, the names which distinguish them were known. In obtaining the great charter (as an act of parliament is called) no new liberties or rights were granted to the people; but the liberties and rights of the constitution were restored, and the government recalled back to its Saxon principles. This act was repeatedly explained and confirmed, yet was again encroached upon by a system of regal power which the kings in general, but the Tudors and Stuarts more especially, endeavoured to frame.

The *first* patriots in the great civil war meant only to reform the office of king, as it was originally established by the principles of the constitution. By too violent a revulsion of the national spirit, the regal office was ruined instead of being restored; and power was carried into a contrary extreme, to the domination of a democracy. On the other hand, by too hasty and too inconsiderate a restoration of Charles the Second, without constitutional conditions annexed to the monarchy, the true Saxon system of government came again into danger; and the nation, during the reigns of Charles II. and James II., was in a constant succession of suffering under, or of struggles against, *the Norman system, a system of indefeasible right of power in the king, of power neither responsible, nor to be resisted, and against which there was no legal remedy.*

This system was maintained and enforced by a party that assumed, and were called by, the name of *Tories* allied with and abetted by Papists. The English spirit of the nation, animating a body of patriots who took the name of *Whigs*, resisted and prevailed against this party. A revolution took place. A Tory and Popish king was exiled; a Whig and Protestant prince was called to the throne; and the succession

was settled and limited in a Protestant line. The rights of the monarchy and the liberties of the people were fixed and established. After this period a very great and powerful party, formed by a combination of civil and ecclesiastical Tories and Papists, never ceased to exert every effort to restore the exiled Popish family; to set up again the Tory system in the state; and to erect an hierarchy in the church approaching every day nearer and nearer to Popery. On the decease of William, Mary, and Ann without heirs, who were Protestants, the nation was again brought into danger of falling back to a Popish king and a Tory government.

Against this system, which endangers or subverts the liberties of the subject; against this Papal tyranny; the British Whigs, both civil and ecclesiastical, came forward in opposition: allied with the Protestants of all denominations, they formed a united and determined phalanx, and stood forth in support of the established government as founded on the principles of the constitution, and under those principles, settled on the house of Hanover, being Protestants.

These two parties were arrayed against each other. The Whigs exerted themselves in defending the constitution and religion of their country. The Tories were become desperate, and were rendered more malignant by being allied with Popery. These were no ordinary times: every thing was at hazard; the spirits of men were wound up to the utmost energy of exertion. In these times, amidst men of rank and fortune in the country, amongst active politicians of the first abilities, the genius and abilities, the vigour and practical knowledge of Walpole *rose ascendant.* Nothing but a spirit of enterprise would then have dared to undertake the business of the nation, knowing what and how perilous it was. The standing foremost in such a political warfare, risquing in the contest an actual war against such an inveterate and desperate party, could arise from and be animated

by nothing but courage derived from principle and knowledge. The point to be gained was a great object, and necessary to the existence of the constitution; the measures by which it was to be obtained were fraught not only with open and direct, but with secret and treacherous dangers, which no man of an ordinary zeal or knowledge would have dared to encounter. Walpole undertook this business, stood foremost, and *had the command in it.* He held the ascendant over the spirits of men, and they ranged themselves in a voluntary subordination to him. With this command he broke the measures of the Tories; he made the Papists understand that it was their best interest to be quiet; he bore down and suppressed the Jacobite party, and rendered them impotent; he warded off the hostile designs of foreign powers; he settled the peace of the nation; he established the government, by fixing the house of Hanover firmly on the throne, under such conditions of administration as restored, perfected, and secured the constitution of his country.

The constitution of a limited monarchy in a state takes out of the hands of the monarch all such power as is not responsible, and which might do wrong, while there are no legal means of remedy or resistance. This part of the system, which is necessary to the people's rights, renders *the king* as to power in himself in some degree *inefficient:* but this great minister, by a constitutional division of power, rendered the *administration of government actually efficient.* Every branch of authority remained in the office of king which could do good and no wrong: that power which was yet necessary to efficiency, but which might be capable of doing wrong without remedy, actuated by the king, was annexed in its operations to the office of minister. Here it was responsible, and, upon any excess of its exertion, here it might be resisted, and was answerable to justice. He took this responsibility on himself, he became answerable. In the establishment therefore of

the power of his administration, he secured the liberties of the state; but rendered government effective.

While the struggle and contest of parties last, men are actuated by the spirit and passions of their party; they require no other motive. When those struggles have ceased, and the contest subsides, men are to be ranged under a general system of established polity. Then that spirit of party by which they ranked in obedience to their leaders, feels no longer those motives; sees not that object; has no longer that scope which excited their love or hatred, and gave motion and direction to their will. If they consider themselves as the comrades of an army that hath conquered, quitting their subordination, many of them demand their share of power, whilst the bulk of the herd clamour for plunder and their share of the booty. Other motives therefore, *such as may influence* their will, must be sought out and applied. Not such motives as theorists, essay-writers, and historians talk of, when they dream: but such as the practical politician knows *are motives* in the nature of things, and must influence the wills of men, being what they are.

A life of active politicks, exercised and trained in forming and opposing parties, in acquiring and holding a lead amongst men, had given Walpole experimental knowledge of the human heart. He had lived with men in their homes in private; he had acted with them abroad in publick; he had seen them in all tempers and seasons; he knew them to the quick, *intus et in cute:* he had experience to feel how little (whatever they might pretend) they were connected by general principle, where the spirit of party ceased, and how ready many of them were to betray one another, or to forsake their leaders, if any offer could make it worth their while to enlist with others. He had on all sides, and in almost every period, had experience of their proneness to change. Many were ready to promote arbitrary measures: he used the influence of

government only to make them free and obedient subjects of a limited government. Even against his enemies, and the enemies of the constitution, where he might have used *force*, he applied only *influence* so far as to disarm mischief; and at the same time, with the same *influence*, taught those enemies to find it their interest to become in some degree friends. Yet, as these proselyte and mercenary friends could *not be trusted in principle*, he led them, bound to obedience, by such notions as had and did continue to operate on them.

With this discernment of the spirits of men, with this temper and moderation, he fixed a new establishment. He secured the house of Hanover on the throne without bloodshed, except of those who were mad enough to run obstinately on the point of the sword of state.

Having perfected and secured the foundations of liberty, having established effective government, having settled the nation in peace, he introduced system into the business of the state, and order, connection, and subordination amongst all the departments. He recovered the administration of the finances out of confusion, and rescued them from corrupt and ruinous management: he established them on a solid basis, and opened sources which might not only have given a continually increasing supply, but through which they might have become reservoirs to the most extensive credit. Had this system of finance, by a general excise, advancing in an increasing series of aggregate surplusses, taken place, the resources of this country would have forerun the calls of any service that common sense or common honesty could have engaged in; would have been equal to any accident which in the ordinary course of human affairs could have come into event. [illegible] the lines, of which he formed the plan, and the *part only* which he established, and the foundation [illegible] greatness. While he maintained the

station of this nation amidst the nations of Europe, *by a system of peace,* commerce flourished, and was extended; and Great Britain became a rich and powerful empire.

Although he could not but feel conscious of the degree of power to which he had raised his country, yet, so long as he maintained his authority in government, he never suffered the foreign views of a stranger king, the pride of the nation, the presumption of military men, or the avarice of merchants, to involve this kingdom in the foolish enterprises of war. He had a courage that felt no fear when the meeting of danger was necessary; he had wisdom that knew how to fear it when it was not necessary.

Although he acquired a high degree of power, and possessed a degree of influence which would have enabled him as a man to do any thing; yet, under every provocation that can exasperate, *he never did an injury,* scarce ever revenged one. He had a magnanimity above all the resentments of the private man. On the contrary, from the suggestions of the same magnanimity, he spared the lives and fortunes of many who had forfeited both, and who would have taken his. He did many kind things to irreconcileable enemies, and conferred many benefits on ungrateful friends.

Although he had established and secured the liberties of his country in peace, yet his own situation was an unceasing warfare. A spirit, however, which always took the ascendant, rendered his post impregnable to his enemies without, and maintained subordination to his command within. The human constitution, both in mind and body, is so framed that, if always on the stretch of exertion, it must at length lose part of its energy. As the activity of his spirit at times abated, he at times ceasing to act as sole minister, entrusted parts of his command to those who should have been friends. In proportion as they were entrusted, they had it in their power to betray. Some who were

admitted to this communication as friends, having by this confidence the means of seeing that he began to abate of his activity, meditated a desertion, in order to enlist under a capitulation with the enemy. Many who had offered him service, but whom he had rejected, turned their views to a new party; on which a rising sun seemed to shine. Sir Robert Walpole thus lost the majority of the house of commons, and surrendered his post. He disdained to capitulate: disarmed as he was of all power, and at the mercy of his enemies in their quarters, he disdained to ask quarter. They meant to destroy him; but here they found his innocence as invulnerable, as they had before found his spirit impregnable. They appointed a committee of inquisition, *to search for proof* of crimes which for twenty years they had imputed to him without proof. Proofs light as air would have served for conviction; but even these could not be found: and so unsubstantial were even the imputed crimes, that they vanished upon the touch. His enemies, to their eternal infamy and dishonour, established upon their own inquisition this only fact, that they had been for twenty years writing, speaking, and acting upon ground that was false.

He retired not with a fortune greater than his fame. While his character became every day more and more admired and praised, as it became understood; and every day more brilliant and illustrious while it was reviewed, under the aggravating sense of regret. Men could not but see in the comparison how unequal the fortunes, which he had left to his family were, to the support of the honour with which he had graced and adorned it; how much below the degree of prosperity to which he had elevated his country.

He retained his anxiety and zeal for the safety of his country to his last breath, which in a critical and dangerous [illegible] (in the year 1743) he expressed in one of the [illegible] speeches ever made in the house of

lords, in his last speech, spoken to apprize the nation of its danger to which it remained insensible. Those who succeeded him shut their eyes against a danger that they dared not own they saw; because they dared not look it in the face, and had taken no precaution to ward it off: they therefore neglected the wisdom of his fear and advice. They affected in themselves, and attempted in others, to stifle all apprehensions, while the danger encreased, and continued advancing into event. The danger which had been thus imminent fell upon the nation in the year 1745, by a rebellion in which the British crown was (as he had told the house of lords it would be) fought for on British ground.

He died in the interval of these periods; and his immediate successors lived upon the fragments of his system, which they had laboured to destroy.

THE END OF VOL. I.

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